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The oars of the pursuers paused for a single instant, as that shrill, startling cry broke upon the unruffled silence of the night.

The Boss Boy

OR,

THE MYSTERY OF THE STRONGBOW.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

Author of "The Gamin Detective," "Nobody's Boy," etc., etc.

CHAPTER V. UNDER COVER.

It was a perilous position in which Phil Hardy found himself. What could a little midge like him do in the sturdy hands of Tim Fagan? And if this was a case of murder, as the boy imagined, they might murder him rather than let him escape with his information.

Yet Phil's mother wit did not for an instant desert him. He glanced quickly about him for a closet. There was none in sight. The bed was too low to crawl under. He remembered that when on the wharf he had seen the light move directly from one room to the other. There must then be a communicating door.

He looked round. There lay the door immediately behind him. He tried the latch. It turned, but the door refused to open. It was locked.

Phil was in a desperate quandary. The rat had been caught in a trap of his own making. But all his movements, so far, had taken place in a moment of time. The now-moving step outside was yet some distance from the door. There was still a chance to make a dash for it.

He gave a quick step toward the door, and then halted with the thought that he could not possibly escape, in a strange, dark house, from a man thoroughly acquainted with every part of it.

As he paused in his flight his eyes fell on the bed. A new idea shot through his mind. He shuddered at the thought, but it was the only hope left, and there was no time to waste in sentiment or superstition. With a quick spring Phil was in the bed, between the dread parcel and the wall, and had wormed down deep under the covers, keeping close beside the corded bundle so that no lifting of the bedclothes should be apparent.

The boy had often assured himself that there was no superstitious foolishness about him, that he was too matter-of-fact for that, and it was with a sense of shame that he strove to repress the involuntary shrinking which affected him, as he felt the outlines of the body above him.

"Didn't think Phil Hardy was such a baby as to be afraid of a dead woman," he thought. "Live things is all that's worth being afraid of. Dunno what harm a dead corp kin do anybody. As fur sperits, there's only one kind that I know on; and I dont swaller that kind nor no other kind."

With a grim smile at his own conceit, Phil nestled closer under the edge of the corpse, and stretched himself out at full length.

He was none too soon. The step of the newcomer now sounded on the floor of the room, and Phil's alert senses traced his progress up to the side of the bed.

The boy was half-smothered for want of air, but he lay utterly motionless, breathing as well as he could under the circumstances, and listening with the utmost attentiveness.

He felt a movement as the new-comer seemed to have touched the bed, or probably made some examination of its dubious contents.

Then there came a voice, faint, far-off, hardly reaching Phil's quick ears under his shroud of bed covers.

"It all looks right," the voice said. "I dont know what it is, but I was sure I heard something moving. I had a sort of foolish notion that it was the woman. But she looks past moving."

"She's as dead as a door-nail," was Phil's unspoken reply. "And door-nails dont move without hands, so dont worry yourself, Tim Fagan."

"I wish Hendricks hadn't brought it here," was the next faint remark.

"I am afraid he will bring me into trouble. I dont like this half and half business. I like folks to be either dead or alive, and done with it."

He seemed to have turned away with this last remark. Phil listened with great relief.

"The woman isn't dead then, but only playin' possum," said Phil to himself. "All I've got to say then is that she's an old hand at the job. And now, Tim Fagan, I dont keer a brass cent how soon you git back to bed agin."

He ventured to slightly lift the bed clothes, so as to get a breath of air. Fagan's steps were receding. He stopped near the door of the room. "I could have sworn I saw the bed move," he muttered uneasily. "I dont like that thing in the house. I thought there wasn't any foolishness about me, but I dont like it. Why didn't Hendricks sink it to the bottom of the river and be done with it?"

"A mighty handy way of bein' done with things," was Phil's noiseless rejoinder. "I think he had a notion to try it on, if he hadn't been afeared.—That's right, Fagan. It's 'bout time you were gettin' out. And I hope you'll have quiet times and sweet dreams for the rest of this blessed night."

Phil got his head once more into the air as he listened to the receding steps without. They were followed by a fumbling about the next room, and then by silence.

The boy was too acute, though, to be in any hurry to move. He let a full half-hour pass before again stirring. It was still dark. The moon had not again broken forth. He heard a sharp pattering sound in the street.

"It's rainin', sure as fish-bones," he said to himself. "I hope it'll come down like pavin' stones. Like to have a little thunder and lightning too. Anything to help a feller out of this scrape."

He was now gliding noiselessly from his covert. In a minute he stood once more beside the bed.

"Wonder if she is dead, or jist shammin'!" he said, gazing at the scarcely visible outlines before him. "They say dead corpses are cold as ice. I'll try this one."

He inserted his hand through the opening in the cloth, and laid a finger on the smooth cheek of the woman.

"Feels jist like velvet," he muttered. "And it aint so cold neither. Jist cool, that's all. Sure as snakes the lady aint no deader than I am. If I dont make Rome howl it's a caution.—And now, I've got to worm myself out of this here habitation."

A fly would have made more noise than did Phil in his outward progress. It was deep darkness again as soon as he had passed beyond the influence of the open window.

But he knew just where to find the stairs, and made his way down them with but a faint creak or two, which were drowned in the dash of rain outside.

"Best make fur the back door of the house," reflected Phil. "There'll be only a bolt or so to open there. And I want to git my shoes, anyhow. Wouldn't do to leave them. Dunno but my shoemaker's got his autygraph on them. Aint a-goin' to let myself be smelt out that way by Tim Fagan's long nose."

Groping along in almost a creeping attitude, Phil made his way back through the house without tumbling over any chairs or kicking any tin pans. He felt his way back into the shed kitchen, and succeeded in reaching the door of which he was in search.

"Only one bolt, and that's a comfort," he said, as he cautiously pulled back the slender iron bar between him and liberty. "And now, I'll wipe Tim Fagan's dust off my feet. It's mean dust, anyhow."

The rain was descending in a brisk shower. But, heedless of that, Phil groped round till he had found his shoes.

"If they aint full of water, I'll sell out!" he ejaculated. "Think I best go barefoot and carry them Wellingtons.—There's one blessing in the rain, anyhow. It'll wash the lamplblack off of my face and toggery."

It would have done any one good to have seen him, if there had been daylight enough to reveal the linky rivulets that coursed down his features and his habiliments, and blackened the ground beneath him.

"I'll be clean as a new penny by the time I git home, that's one comfort," he thought, as he made his way down the alley, and into the deserted street.

Phil trudged homeward through the drenching rain, constantly congratulating himself on his good fortune in getting such an easy and clean washing.

"There might be something in luck, after all," he soliloquized, as an extra heavy dash of water deluged him.

"Where are you going, boy?" cried a policeman, comfortably ensconced under an awning.

"Home," was Phil's short reply.

"What are you carrying there?"

"Shoes," said Phil.

"Stole them, hey?"

"I'd giv a quarter to the chap that would steal them from me," replied Phil.

"Then why dont you wear them out, and get rid of them that way?"

"My skin turns the water better. Good-night, Johnny!" and Phil was off at a run, for fear his questioner might amuse himself by arresting him.

He got safely home without further stoppage by the guardians of the night.

When his grandmother entered Phil's room, next morning, she gave vent to a cry of terror, and ran quickly into the passage, wringing her hands in dismay.

She had been unaware of the boy's return, and the sight she beheld was enough to frighten the anxious old lady.

"What is the matter, Mrs. Hardy?" inquired the occupant of another room, who had been startled by her cry.

"My poor boy!" she moaned in answer. "Something dreadful has happened to him. I know. Oh, Mr. Jones, just go into his room and look at him. I am afraid to see him agin."

Mr. Jones himself was scared at the first sight of Phil. He had taken off and wrung out his wet clothes, and had them strung round the room in various positions to dry.

As for himself, he lay in bed, covered to the throat, and only his face visible. But such a streaked, druggled, and generally disreputable face was seldom seen on a human being. It looked like the map of Turkey, done in charcoal, on a flesh-colored background.

"It is some dreadful fever, I know," moaned the old lady from the doorway. "Or maybe the plague. That, they say, turns people black."

As sure as you live it is the case," she cried. "The young rogue has been turning himself in to a blackamoor."

This fingering of his face woke Phil from his deep slumber. He opened his eyes and gazed dubiously up into the two faces bending over him.

"What's busted?" he asked. "Is the house afire?"

"Where have you been, you reprobate?" exclaimed Mrs. Hardy, with as much temper as she was capable of showing to Phil. "And how did you get your face into such a horrible plight?"

"Up came Phil's hand, and rubbed over his face lustily. He then held it up before his eyes, a blank look of dismay spreading over his features, which was succeeded by a merry laugh.

"Well, I'll be swigged," he said, "if I didn't think half the skin had been washed off of me. And here I am streaked like a hyena.—Spose it's the badness washin' out of me. It rained hard enough to git down below the skin."

"To just look at the boy," groaned Mrs. Hardy. "And his clothes soaking wet."

"Got caught in a drizzle last night," returned Phil, with a grimace of his streaked face that set them both laughing. "Now you slide, granny, you and Mr. Jones. I'll git up and wash myself into a Christian agin. Reckon I'll have to put on some of my Sunday fixins, too, till these duds dry."

"But how did it all happen, Phil?" asked Mr. Jones, curiously.

"Tell you that arter I git up and scrub my face a bit," replied Phil.

His visitors retired, leaving Phil to make himself presentable, and to invent some plausible story to satisfy the curiosity of Mr. Jones.

CHAPTER VI. PHIL PROSPECTING.

PHIL was quite a rejuvenated youth when he presented himself at the breakfast-table of his grandmother. His face shone as if it had been polished with emery. He wore his best suit, which set off his handsome figure to advantage; and his eyes sparkled like two rubies.

"Gettin' to feel like myself agin," he said, as he saw the old lady's eyes fixed proudly on him. "Sort of empty, too. Guess I kin eat my share."

"I am never afraid but what you will do that, Phil," she laughingly responded.

"Spose appertite must be a good thing fur boys to have, or they wouldn't have so much of it," replied Phil, in a tone of apology. "Seems somehow to grow with me."

Breakfast over, Phil proceeded to satisfy Mr. Jones and Mrs. Hardy as to his adventures of the night before. But the story he told them was no more like the reality than his streaked face had been like the red-cheeked countenance he now displayed.

It did not strike him as quite advisable to make public his housebreaking enterprise, or to take too many confidants into the task which lay before him.

When he at length started out on his usual daily business of vagabondage, he found himself again waylaid by his little friend Susy.

"Out late last night agin, Phil," she said, shaking her finger admonishingly at him. "I could not sleep till I heard you come in. Especially when the rain come up."

"I was jist like a drowned duck, Susy," confessed Phil. "But I'm all right agin now, little sweetheart."

"And where have you been? And did you find out anything?" she eagerly inquired.

"If I tell you, Susy, you won't tell anybody? Not even your father or mother?"

"Nobody. If you tell me not to."

"Let's take a seat then, Susy, for it's a long story. And I know some of it will make your hair stand right up on end."

She spread her hands resolutely on her curling locks, as if determined that they should go into no such perpendicular freaks, as the two took their usual seat, at the head of the stairs. Phil did not hesitate to Susy, as he had done to his former auditors. She was the confidante of all his adventures, and he told her a plain, unvarnished tale of his last night's work. But it was to her romance of the deepest dye. She held her breath in terror or excitement at many points in the narrative, and when Phil reached his discovery of the deathly face it seemed indeed as if her hair would stand on end.

"Oh, Phil, what did she look like?" Susy breathlessly exclaimed.

"As pretty as a picture."

"Are you sure she wasn't dead?"

"Tim Fagan said she wasn't. That's all I know, 'cept that her face didn't feel like a corpse's."

"But you haven't come to that yet."

"Well then you mustn't get skeered at what I'm a-goin' to tell you now, fur I got into difficulties, Susy. But I'm all right now, so don't be gittin' nervous."

She could not very well control her nerves, however, as Phil told of his peril and escape.

"You're a dear, brave fellow, Phil, and it's just as good as reading a novel, and I'm going to kiss you for it."

And Susy's arms were round Phil's neck in a hug which was full of nervous excitement.

"What are you going to do now, Phil?" she eagerly asked.

"Don't know, Susy. Tell you to-morrow," said Phil.

But it was with considerable trouble that he escaped from his young friend, and made his way to the street.

Our vagabond was not very well defined in his ideas as to what was best to do in these very critical circumstances.

His first movement was toward the neighborhood of the previous night's adventure. The house stood there still; as innocent looking and free from dubious secrets as summer sunshine can make a house appear.

The window of the mysteriously-occupied chamber was closed with a drawn curtain. This was the only evidence of concealment. Tim Fagan himself stood in the door of the tap-room, tall, raw-boned, muscular; with a thick red whisker and a fierce look about the eyes. Phil blessed his stars that he had not fallen into that man's hands the night before.

"He'd been wuss on me than a lemon-squeezer," thought the boy, as he noticed the brawny bare arm of the innkeeper. "If I'd a-got into those beatings, which I s'pose he calls hands, he'd just a-squeezed me. If things keeps on this way I'll come to think that's a thing as I lack."

Phil walked slowly away, deeply cogitating. His step became more decided, as his thoughts took definite shape, and he seemed to have arrived at some fixed conclusion.

"I calculate the custom-housers ought to be the ones to take a job like this in; fer I know it's smuggled goods. And I giv in that the business is rittin' too weighty fur me."

In less than half an hour Phil found himself in the office of the New York Collector of Customs, having asked for and been ushered into the presence of that individual.

This gentleman was alone, and looked up inquiringly at his youthful visitor, as the latter walked independently forward.

"What can I do for you, my boy?" he asked.

"Got five minutes to waste on a feller of my size?" responded Phil, helping himself to a chair.

"I have no time to waste on any one," was the smiling reply.

"Cause I s'pose you'll think it's wasted," said Phil, depositing his hat on the table. "It's just this way: I'm on the track of some smuggled goods. I want little help, fur it's a cinch to fish. And I didn't know where better to look fur it."

"What kind of smuggled goods?" asked the collector, leaning forward.

"Well," said Phil, hesitatingly, "I dunno just what kind of merchandise you call it. It's a sort you don't often look up in your warehouses, cause why, it won't keep."

"I have no time to beat around the bush at this rate," the officer impatiently replied.

"What is this merchandise, where was it smuggled from? and where is it?"

"That's three questions in one, and you don't give a feller time to take breath between them," responded Phil, impatiently. "It's a queer sort. I kin tell you that."

"Will you answer my questions?"

"Well, then, it's a woman," said Phil, driven to bay. "That is, it's a corpse. Or I mean it's a corpse as if it were only dead and not playin' possum, as I've got a notion it is."

"What foolish nonsense this!" asked the annoyed officer. "I have no more time to waste on you, boy. Merchants, now-a-days, do not import women. There are more here now than they can conveniently handle. And as for the corpse that is not a corpse, that is a riddle I shall not undertake to guess."

"It looks like one, anyhow," muttered Phil. "I tell you this. That was a feminine corpse, done up in drygoods, smuggled out of the Strongbow last night. And it's layin' now at Tim Fagan's, on the wharf. And if somethin' aint done mighty soon I'm afeared there'll be murder."

"More likely a resurrection, if it is a corpse now," said the collector, ringing a bell at his elbow.

"Show this young man out," he said, shortly, to the messenger who entered.

"See here, Mr. Collector," said Phil, saucily. "Maybe I've got things a little mixed up. But I don't see no use in your bein' so mighty crusty about it. It's your business to look up smuggled goods. That's what you're put here fur by our feller citizens. Now I've posted you 'bout a square bit of smugglin', and maybe a murder. I don't care a brass picaune what you do 'bout it. But if it's a murder, you look out. I bet somebody'll squirm."

"The police take charge of murders," said the collector, in a quiet tone. "Suppose you favor them with your comendrum."

"All sounds!" retorted Phil. "I'll give you this for your pipe, and my meekness. I'll give you into politics, and I bet I'll be at the head of our ward ring afore I'm in it six months. So you look out, Mr. Collector. I'm a-goin' to make that seat of yours a hot one."

And Phil swaggered out, with his hat set jauntily on one side of his head. The official followed him with astonished eyes.

"What could have ailed the boy?" he mused. "His story was a most incomprehensible muddle. Is he cracked in his upper story, or has he really discovered something which he has mixed in the telling? At all events he is the saniciest young reprobate I have seen for an age."

Meanwhile Phil was making his independent way down the street.

He, too, mused as he went, somewhat in the following strain:

"Got a kind of steep notion that I've been making a fool of myself. It's a hard thing to say, but it runs in my noddle it's the truth. If Mr. Collector knowed what I was talkin' about he knowed a blamed sight more than I did, fur I got wimmin folks and corpses tied up in a kind of hard knot, and couldn't git the riddickins thing open. And if I did sell myself fur a fool I stuck to it anyhow. I wouldn't go back on a thing I'd said fur enough customers to pack that big shanty full. 'Tain't my way to git out of a blunder backwards. I believe in goin' through, if it takes the hide off."

Thus cogitating, Phil made slow headway toward the wharves, the thought passing through his mind that perhaps he had best take the advice just given him, and apply to the police authorities.

"I just s'pose, though," he thought, "that they'll worry me with all sorts of questions till I git impudent. And then I know it'll all be up."

And it's 'stonishin' how little a boy kin say without it's bein' called impudence. Now I thought I was riddickins perfide to that customer till he covered me out. And fur all that I bet he'd swear I was saucy as a pet cat. It's just odd what queer ways men has."

"Well, I'll s'pose, if here aint Phil Hardy in his Sunday fixins; and it aint Saturday yet!"

Phil turned hastily as he heard this familiar voice at his ear. He saw the begrimed face of Dirty Dick.

"Hallo, boss!" was Phil's unique salutation.

"Oh! you needn't be squintin' at my rig. Been a-callin' on big bugs, and had to spruce up a little."

"Wonder if he aint been to a fire last night?" said Dick, sarcastically.

"Oh, blow all that!" was Phil's impatient answer. "You didn't pay for them, and won't be axed to. So dry up, where's the boys?"

"Dunno," replied Dick. "Goin' to the wharf?"

"Guess so."

"All right. Trot along. I aint ashamed of you. Fur all that I've got a notion that it might do some good if you'd put that face of yours on a grindstone, and take off an inch or two of sile. I'd like to see how fur down the hide is."

"You be fiddled! I scrubbed my face last Sunday," averred Dick.

"With a blackin' brush!"

"It's agin my principle to answer sich questions," said Dick, with assumed dignity.

Thus sparring the boys at length reached the wharf, the scene of their late quarrel. The Strongbow was now busily unloading. The wharf beside her was thickly strewn with her miscellaneous cargo, and a dozen drays were engaged in hauling it away.

Phil's enemy, the mate, was occupied in overseeing the process of unloading. He seemed not to have forgotten the late episode of the boy. Phil could see him gradually approaching, in an apparently unintentional manner.

"Look out for black whiskers," said Dick, warningly. "He's sneakin' for you. Wants to pay you out for that bite."

"He'll come to see you, I'm a-watchin' him. If he comes it over Phil Hardy, he kin climb to the mast head and crow."

The boys stood looking on at the unloading, seemingly unaware that the mate was nearly within reach.

With a sudden quick motion this individual made a grasp for Phil. But he calculated without his host.

The boy was ten feet away, with his fingers at his nose, while the mate came near measuring his length on the wharf.

"Guess you want my tother eye tooth in your other leg," said Phil.

"If I get hold of you I will settle for your bite," cried the mate, savagely.

"What made the boy say that?" he growled savagely between his teeth. "It was a chance guess. The young hound knows something. He may have come to the wharf this morning just for the purpose of saying it. I am afraid Tim Fagan has leaked."

Reaching the Gray Harbor, which was the poetical title of Fagan's groggery, Mr. Hendricks turned resolutely in, not dreaming, apparently, that any one could have had an object in following him.

The brawny innkeeper was behind his bar, attending to the spiritual needs of a brace of rickety tars. Mr. Hendricks called for a glass of ale, and stood slowly sipping it till the sailors were gone.

"Get somebody in your place, at once," commanded Hendricks, as he spoke to you."

Fagan called a young man to the bar, and led the way back into the house.

"Now I'm on hand," he said, when they had reached a rear room.

"How many folks are there about your shanty, Fagan?"

"Nobody but me and my wife, except the young fellow that tends to the bar."

"And do they know about—?" and he indicated the rest by an upward twirl of his thumb.

"Mrs. Fagan does, of course. I couldn't hide it from her. But she's as true as steel. And she knows the kind of a fist I carry, too."

"And the bartender?"

"He knows no more about it than a street boy."

"That is not saying much, Fagan," was the mate's fierce answer. "Street boys know a good deal too much about it. Why, blast it, man, I was twitted to my teeth, not an hour ago, by a saucy little monkey of a wharf rat. Now I want to know who has been leakin'?"

"If he got it from me you can chew me up."

"And I know that my wife has not been out of the house, and there has been no such chap in. Who was this boy?"

"Good heavens, man, I have not got a directory of the young vagabonds of New York in my brain," Hendricks impatiently replied. "He is a little creature, with an ugly red face, and I suppose about twenty years old. And he has teeth like tiger's claws. That is all I know of him."

"He has not been in this house to-day then. I'll swear that," was Fagan's positive assertion.

"If he knows anything, he must have got it somewhere else," he said, looking at the vessel knows of this business."

"Nobody but me and the captain."

"He might have been lurking about last night, and have seen you."

"That won't answer, Fagan," was the quick response. "I am afraid that the little villain knows the whole business. Is it safe?" pointing upward.

"You can see for yourself," said the innkeeper, leading toward the stairs. "And I hope you'll get rid of it blamed soon, for I don't want to get into any scrape about it."

Hendricks quietly followed him to the upper room.

There, on a bed in the corner, lay that which had so startled Phil Hardy the night before, a long, corded bundle, lying utterly motionless.

"She hasn't stirred," declared Fagan, in a low tone. "I'm desperately afraid the woman is dead."

"No, no," replied Hendricks. "It is a strong narcotic, which will take its effect before to-morrow. If it should go off, though, keep her quiet, if you have to use the chloroform; and force the draught I gave you into her mouth."

"I'll do that," returned Fagan.

"Let there be no bungling," enjoined Hendricks, decisively. "If she should come to and give an alarm, it might be a bad business for all of us. She must be got rid of to-night. Mind you, if she should recover, that her pretty face and soft tongue don't soften your nerves."

"I have no nerves," protested Fagan, bluntly. "And as for her face, I don't care to look at it."

"It is the face of a beautiful young devil—or that will be a devil to us if she gets loose," replied Hendricks. "There's more than the money that is in it concerned in our putting her away. It is a question of safety now."

As he spoke he threw back the close folds of the cloth, revealing the beautiful, colorless face that lay so placidly within.

The two men stood gazing with hard eyes down upon that which should have softened a heart of stone.

Suddenly Hendricks started and grasped his companion's arm with a fierce grip. He pointed sternly downward.

"What is it?" asked Fagan.

"That! Where did that come from?"

His voice had a threatening ring. His finger almost touched the face of the woman, on whose pearl-white cheek was visible a round black spot.

"I'll be shot if I know!" cried Fagan, with a quick dash. "It looks desperately like a finger mark."

"It is just that," averred Hendricks. "And look here! Is that the way Mrs. Fagan washes her sheets?"

He pointed beyond the body, where grimy black spots marked the bedclothes.

Fagan stood for a moment as if stupefied with surprise. Then, with a quick movement, he drew the insensible body forward in the bed, and threw back the coverlets.

The sheets within had changed from their original white to a sooty blackness that would have broken the heart of a neat housekeeper.

"Yes, you can well open your eyes!" cried the incensed mate. "Have you put a chimney-sweep to bed there did that come from?"

Fagan did not answer for a moment, but stood regarding the bed with distended eyes. He then turned, as if the mate's last words had given him an idea, and ran hastily downstairs.

Hendricks followed him more slowly, cursing in a low, ominous tone at every step.

He reached the front room adjoining the bar shortly after Fagan. That individual was standing before an open hearth, from which he had removed the fire-bricks, and was looking disconsolately at a heap of soot in the interior of the fireplace.

"My house has been entered last night!" he cried. "And by your boy! Nobody bigger could come through this flue. See here where he has left his sooty feet on the carpet!"

"You're a sweet specimen to have a delicate business in hand," exclaimed Hendricks in a savage tone, his hand within his breast, as if half-tempted to draw and use a weapon on his dubious associate.

"It is your own bungling then," retorted Fagan, with equal fierceness. "You have let the boy track you here. If there is any harm comes to me from this work, I'll be hanged if you shan't answer for it."

Hendricks was silent. He seemed to be struck by the possible truth of Fagan's theory.

"Is that all?" he asked. "Was there no noise? No other trace of a housebreaker?"

"Yes. I was awakened in the middle of the night, and I saw the boy. He seemed to be the sound of some kind in the next room. I got a candle and prospect, but everything looked all right. I had a half notion it was the woman, but she lay as quiet as she does now. My wife found the kitchen door unbolted this morning, and I thought it must have been forgotten last night."

"And you got frightened away by a dead woman's face," said Hendricks, sneeringly. "And all the time your chimney-sweep lay under the covers, hanging at you for a superstitious fool, as you were."

Fagan's harsh face darkened as he answered: "It is as well for him! If I had caught the boy there I would not have left two bones of him hanging together. There is one thing certain, Hendricks. That boy knows too much for our safety. He must be got rid of."

"That's my notion. The sharp young rogue sold himself to me cheap, this morning. He has got to be settled. And the woman—"

"Yes, the woman," interrupted Fagan, with an anxious expression. "It was a chance."

The precious pair of rogues sat and earnestly conversed for the next half hour.

"Then at two o'clock, sharp, to-night," announced Hendricks, with incoherent loudness, as he began to depart.

"Make it two. I will be ready," replied Fagan, following from the room.

They were quite unaware that the window had been raised and the shutter only bowed, and that a pair of sharp ears outside had overheard this conversation.

"Scoot, Dirty Dick!" whispered Phil Hardy. "The game's afoot."

And the two young spies hastily left that perilous locality.

The day passed on; the night came. It was clear and moonlit. But as midnight went by the moon sunk low westwardly behind the roofs and spires of the city. Only the faint starlight and the distant gleam of street lamps, broke the thick gloom which lay upon the dark waters of the bay. The night air was still and stillness of June and everything lay in placid warmth.

The great ships rose and fell with a long, low pulse at the wharves and at their anchorage in the bay. A boat containing two youthful occupants, was slowly gliding down the sides of an occupied pier, rose on this same low swell from the ocean without. The seas and streams were far more tranquil than were their young hearts at that moment, as they anxiously waited for some expected event.

The hour of two tolled solemnly from some far-off belfry tower. Almost simultaneously footsteps and low voices were audible on the adjoining wharf. The boys remained silent until they heard the faint sound of oars. In a moment more they caught the glimpse of a low, dark boat stealing swiftly out over the dusky waters of the East river.

Their own oars moved as if muffled. No sound came from them as their boat shot out in the wake of the former.

For a mile this silent flight and chase continued. The middle of the stream was reached, and both boats headed down toward the bay.

"Listen!" said one of the occupants of the foremost boat. "That sounds like an oar."

His companion stooped down and looked out in a line with the surface of the water.

"By all that's bad, Fagan," he replied, "there is a boat, not a quarter of a mile off, and headed straight this way. Pull hard, man, we may be pursued."

"Best lighten our load and head for shore," muttered Fagan, savagely. "We're too heavy astern. There's no better place than this for the job. Our unlucky ballast will sink like a stone; and there aint a craft on the river can overtake us in the night boat."

"Well thought of," assented Hendricks, harshly. "Wish I'd put a stone to her feet to make it surer. Pull ahead, Tim. I'll do the work."

Shipping his oars he stooped over and lifted the heavy bundle in his arms. There was a quick shudder. The folds of the cloth fell back from the woman's face, revealing parted lips and distended eyes, whose gaze fell first on the cruel face of the mate, and then on the dark, heaving waters.

He resolutely lifted her over the side of the boat. One loud, long, wailing scream rang out over the dim waters, waving echoes miles away, and reaching the startled ears of drowsy watchmen on the city wharves.

There was a sudden plunge in the stream, and a moment of silence.

The boat of the murderers shot onward in an arrow-like flight, leaving only a diminishing ring of wavelets behind it.

The oars of the pursuers paused for a single instant, as the light, startling cry broke upon the untroubled silence of the night.

Then their oars fell again in unison, and the light boat sped rapidly forward.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 405.)

In the list of subscriptions to the Indian Famine Relief Fund we find the following entry from Liverpool: "Fines in a family for the misuse of the word 'awful,' £1." It is to be hoped that this is only an isolated case; for if all the families where words are misused are perforce, to become contributors to the Indian Famine Fund, before very long there will be a famine in England.

I LOVE THEE NOT.

BY HERMAN KARPIS.

I love thee not, altho' thou art
As beautiful and bright
As yon sweet orb that sparkles thro'
The amber veil of night,
I met thee when thy soft, dark eyes
Were languishing with care,
And loved thee when thy quivering lips
Breathed out a whispered prayer
That Heaven would shield thy youthful head,
And guard thy lonely way
Through this dark wilderness of woe
To life's eternal day.

I sought to turn thy darkening thoughts
To hope's sunlight and joy,
Lest chilling frost's untimely blight
Should Heaven's fair work destroy.
I woo'd thee when the light of love
Was beaming on thy brow,
And vreach'd in smiles thy lips, as sweet
As those that grace them now.

I won thee when none other came
To cheer thy saddened heart,
And thought I'd won a priceless gem,
Whose worth would ne'er depart.
Vain hope! a gayer rival came
And dimmed the ardent glow
That lighted up my heart with joys
Which again can know.
Since truth has fled thy once pure breast,
Now stained by treachery's blot—
Although with radiant beauty blest,
False one, I love thee not!

Margoun, the Strange:

Gilbert Grayling's Young Wife.

BY WM. MASON TURNER, M. D.,

AUTHOR OF "COLLEGE RIVALS," "MASKED MINER," "\$50,000 REWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ARRIVAL AT THE GRANGE.—SOMETHING SEEN.

OLD Gilbert Grayling could scarcely believe his senses, as, entering his wife's chamber, he tottered on and reached the sitting-room.

"God be thanked that I have drawn another paper," he muttered. "Now I will destroy the other, so that—"

He paused abruptly and strode eagerly to the desk. He flashed his eyes closely around. Head in the room. Then he ransacked every drawer in the desk. But the paper was not to be found!

"Too bad!" he ejaculated, in a low, uneasy tone. "But, I darsay it has been thrown into the grate, as refuse paper; if so, all is well. If not—But it must be so."

Consoling himself with this reflection, he flung himself into a chair and gave way to moody thoughts which of late had been his constant companions.

A week elapsed.

Mrs. Grayling was soon well, and her stern, stately, beautiful self again. Dr. Goodspeed had in the meantime called as he had promised. He was glad to find that his "few simple remedies" had acted so well. Mrs. Grayling returned him his book with profuse thanks.

Thorie Manton had seen nothing of the Graylings since the adventure near the Grange gate. But he and the faithful Margoun had not been idling away their time in the old Lodge. Every day, in company, they had scoured the copse in all directions; and they found ample evidence that strange feet had been prowling through the woods.

Footprints were abundant; and near the spot where Manton's life had last been attempted, a handkerchief had been found. On a corner of it, in indelible ink, were marked the following letters: "M. D."

Thorie knew well enough that his old foe, Moses Denby, was still on his track; and he had ample cause to be certain that the fellow was unrelentingly thirsting for his blood.

This circumstance gave the young man a good deal of concern. There had been a time in the not distant past when he would have laughed at all this, when nothing would have better suited his fiery nature, than to have hunted down Moses Denby, and fought with him—foot to foot—steel to steel—the wages of life or death. But that time had passed; for in his heart fresh pulses were beating, and he felt that a new world was opened up to him. He did not care to have his life jeopardized now.

Thorie Manton loved Grace Grayling.

Despite her sad heart, Grace smiled at her last words.

But Clara Dean did not smile. A musing look, in the last moment, had gradually settled upon her face. Looking up quietly, she said:

"One thing is certain in my mind, Grace, and that is: your stepmother and Abner Denby have met before tonight!"

"What! And why do you think so?"

"I saw a glance pass between them, when your father so curtly introduced his hired man to her. There was something significant in that glance. Wouldn't it be quite strange if it should turn out that—"

She paused—a meaning smile playing around her lips.

"I saw no such glance," answered Grace, uneasily. "But you were going to say something else, Clara?"

"Only this: it would be strange if the present Mrs. Grayling should turn out to be the former lady-love of your father's head-clerk—the fair, but faithless Cynthia Summers!"

Grace sat bolt upright in her chair; her smooth brow wrinkled and a hot reply was on her lips. But forcing a smile, she said:

"Tis an insinuation unworthy of you, Clara; and what you say is sheerest nonsense. The very idea!"

Clara only smiled.

The two girls were certainly very wide-awake, for they continued to talk until long after the old mansion was wrapped in silence, until past the weird and witch-like midnight hour.

But at last they arose, and began their preparations for retiring.

"Did it ever strike you, Grace," said Clara, in an abstracted manner, "that this old mansion is a fitting place for a tip-top, first-class ghost promenade?" and she laughed loud.

"Ghost! Yes; and did you know, Clara, there is an old-time tale that the old mansion is haunted—that it is infested by the uneasy spirit of one of its long-time owners, one of the Mantons, who met in some way with a sudden death?"

"Oh, yes; 'tis an old-time tale to me," was the reply. "This is a fitting hour for ghosts to walk; so say old women and wiseacres! And upon my soul, the deserted veranda under our window is a marvelous place for those unsubstantial nothings to take an airing upon!"

With a light, scornful laugh Clara walked to the window which opened upon the veranda. The curtain was drawn aside.

But a chill of sudden horror almost froze Clara Dean's heart, as, at that very moment, a short figure, in sheeted white, passed slowly by the window.

With a wailing cry Clara staggered back and fell to the floor.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE NIGHT OF THE RECEPTION.

ABNER DENBY had heard the shriek; and he had seen, only a few moments before, the apparition which had passed by Grace's window.

There were two others in the mansion who heard the cry, likewise—Mrs. Grayling and Florine Flavelle.

These two were, at the time, in the maid's room where the lady had had her mysterious interview with Abner Denby.

She started at the cry, and exclaimed:

"Good heavens! What can that be?"

The French maid, though somewhat startled, soon recovered her wonted taciturnity, and smiled as she said:

"Tis rumored, madame, that this old house is haunted; 'tis only my suggestion, you know."

"Haunted! Bosh! I rather fear that that white-faced fool, Abner Denby, has been seen, and—"

"Let us step out into the yard and take a look," coolly interrupted Florine, moving toward the door.

Mrs. Grayling hesitated, then the two stole out into the cold night. Reaching the yard they glanced about them, then up at the dark veranda running by the second-story window.

"Good heavens, madame! Look!" ejaculated the maid, in a frightened whisper.

She was pointing toward the further end of the long porch, at a short, dull-white object which was creeping away in that direction. A moment, and it disappeared as though suddenly swallowed up in the darkness.

Mrs. Grayling had seen it, then fled into the house, and stole like a guilt-stricken thing into her chamber, where her husband had been asleep for more than an hour.

It was known, the following day, that on the night which had just passed, a veritable ghost had been seen by more than one person under the snow-covered roof of the old home.

When this news reached the ears of Mr. Grayling he was visibly annoyed. He scouted the ghost theory in toto. When alone he muttered:

"Confound this thing! It bothers me—when I have enough on hand already! This may be some prowler who is after robbery and takes this guise to attain his object. As to the 'haunted' tale, belonging to the mansion, 'tis simply absurd. For my soul, I am sorry now—for more reasons than one—that I dismissed old Silas. He would have been first-rate at ferreting out this mystery. I wonder where the poor old fellow is! I darsay in Shoreville. I must search him out and bring him back."

Mr. Grayling was not satisfied that day until he and John had made a search. The old mansion was ransacked from garret to cellar, and every hole and corner, nook, cranny and secret passage looked into. But, in vain. Nothing suspicious was found; and the scare subsided.

In due time the ghost rumor reached Thorle Manton. It came in such an authentic shape that when he heard it a serious look overspread his brow.

"I know the old-time tale concerning one of my dead ancestors," he remarked, with an incredulous smile. "But, that was worse than idle talk. I would give five hundred dollars if I was allowed to watch in the old mansion, if I could get my hands on this ghost. 'Tis my opinion that it would turn out to be that villain, Moses Denby."

For a long time he, and the ever-present Margoun, consulted about the affair; but as young Manton suggested the name of Moses Denby, the East Indian shook his head.

Another week rolled away, and at last came the momentous evening of the grand reception at the Grange.

Manton's prompt and polite note accepting the invitation had pleased Mr. Grayling vastly. His opinion of the young man had changed completely within the last two weeks.

Was it owing to the fact that Thorle Manton was now a wealthy gentleman? Or was it because Thorle Manton's lionine courage and iron arm had stood between him and her he loved, and death?

At all events old Gilbert Grayling was glad that his young neighbor was coming. He imparted the news to his daughter; and he noted well the quick flashing of her eye, and the sudden tingling of her cheek. He knew that she, too, was pleased.

The reception was indeed a grand affair. "All the world" was there. The elite of Shoreville and the surrounding country graced the occasion with their presence. Old Dr. Goodspeed, of course, was present. The fine old gentleman seemed inclined to patronize the greater portion of the company. He certainly took unusual pains to impress every one with whom he came in contact that he was the family physician at the aristocratic Grange.

At an early hour Thorle Manton was ready. He was arrayed faultlessly and richly; he never looked handsomer in his life.

The young man had been anxious for Margoun to go, too, intimating that he could readily secure him an invitation, but the tall, stately Hindoo had respectfully, yet almost haughtily, declined any such efforts in his behalf.

Then Thorle had entered his carriage, and was soon speeding through the dark, half-moonlighted copse toward the Grange.

But that carriage was not the same dilapidated vehicle in which, a short time before, the young man had escorted Grace and Clara to their home. Far from it!

Nor was brawny, broad-shouldered Aleck, now in handsome livery, scarcely to be recognized as the same ragged young fellow who drove the cart, with the broken down steed, to Shoreville on the day of his young master's return to the Lodge.

Margoun was left alone. But he cared not. Seated in the study, he passed the time in smoking, reading, and promenading the room. But as the night deepened, he flung himself into a chair, and leaning back, gave himself up to thought.

Gradually his eyes closed, his hands sunk by his side, and a deep slumber fell upon him.

An hour passed; then another. Still Margoun slept on. But he suddenly awoke at last and glanced toward the window.

A quick, loud snapping, as of an exploded gun-cap, coming from that direction, had awakened him.

A single look and he sprang to his feet. At the window, plainly showing by the light from within, were the shoulders and white, square face of a man. He held in his hand a pistol.

Like lightning Margoun snatched out his own weapon and fired. Then came the sudden, sharp sound of shivering glass. A second, and it was followed by a loud howl of pain, as the white face, which the East Indian knew so well, disappeared from the window.

Margoun sprang forward, and flinging up the sash, looked out.

But the prowler was gone—gone not to be seen again around the old Lodge.

Margoun quietly reloaded his pistol, and resumed his seat, determined to remain up until his friend should return.

Midnight passed; then the early hours of morning came. The East Indian still waited and watched.

It was nearly day when the faint creaking of carriage-wheels echoed in the inclosure at the Lodge. A few moments later Thorle Manton entered the room.

His face was as white as a winding-sheet; he was trembling from head to foot.

"Strange news," Margoun said, "range news at the Grange to-night!" he said, in a voice almost sepulchral in tone, as he flung himself into a chair, and almost glared at his dusky companion.

We must return to the Grange.

Thorle Manton was the observed of all observers, and he was most warmly welcomed by Mr. Grayling. When he was presented to the flashing, resplendent new wife, the young man bowed like a courtier over her jeweled hand.

And Mrs. Grayling could not repress a glance of admiration, as her eyes rested upon his manly form.

But that expression gave way to one of bitter envy, as a moment later, she saw him offer his arm to Grace, and saunter away amid the thronging crowd. It was a notable event, and so many at the Grange on that memorable night thought and said.

As Thorle with his lovely partner was promenading the length of the large, old-fashioned parlor, he almost halted, as all at once, he came face to face with Abner Denby.

That young fellow, so far as attire was concerned, was almost if not quite the peer of Thorle Manton; and the blushing girl who hung fastidiously upon his arm, rivalled Grace Grayling in beauty.

That girl was Clara Dean, and the dark-eyed, red-cheeked maiden never shone so resplendently.



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Sunshine Papers.

A Talk to Talkers.

THERE is an art in which all individuals of sound faculties should constantly seek to perfect themselves. It is an art that gains people's admiration and respect; gives pleasure to associates; refines and elevates one's self and all those with whom one comes in contact; is acquired without neglect of any other pursuit, and may be mastered completely and easily by every man and woman of ordinary intelligence. This most desirable art, is the art of *talk* correctly. To speak pure, elegant, concise, grammatical English is one of the greatest charms that men and women can possess; and if we may be permitted to repeat—it is a charming art completely and easily within the reach of every individual, poor and rich, alike. Yet strangely enough, in the ordinary walks of life, it is the exception rather than the rule

to meet persons of perfectly correct diction. Popular lecturers, orators, and clergymen, often make most absurd mistakes in the pronunciation of words and the construction of sentences. Business men, and clerks, and school-children, and the young women and mothers at home, all mar their speech with inelegancies, and interjections, and grammatical inaccuracies. We have heard men and women who ought to know better, and who do know better, from simple carelessness, talk most inelegantly; and young ladies who have had every advantage for study use such shamefully incorrect language that strangers listening to it could scarcely fail to set them down as quite uneducated. Fathers and mothers, who should aim to make refined and careful conversation one of the elevating and healthful influences of the home-life of their children, frequently seem utterly regardless of purity of expression and orthodoxy; and even children daily attending school, and daily reciting a lesson in grammar, make the most barbarous mistakes in the use of language.

There is no excuse for this prevalence of conversational imperfection, for schools are numerous, and free, and the hours are neither irksome nor inconvenient; the child of the poorest parents, in town or country, may spend a few years, or a few months of each year, at school acquiring the rudiments of a sound education; and these foundations of learning gained it is perfectly and even easily possible for those who are so disposed to improve themselves day by day, a life-time without, without further aid from masters.

Yet we think this popular defect may be accounted for in several ways; the flood of cheap, exciting literature that pervades the country, poisons the purity of the language of many young persons by familiarizing them with vulgar words, profane expressions, and the low and incorrect language put in the mouths of the characters that figure in the plots.

Then, too, within a few years past our language has been deluged with a rapid increase of slang and oddly idiomatic sentences. Moreover, a certain class of young men and women, in affecting a fast or foreign style, have fallen into the way of using numberless interjections and absurd repetitions. And, lastly, careless habits, rather than real ignorance, are accountable for many of even the worst mistakes we hear. It is so easy, unless one is watchful of their words, to fall into errors that are common to those about us. We repeat, however, that there is no excuse for those who have had the advantage of a fair education, or, indeed, for those persons who by some combination of fortuitous circumstances have been denied any opportunities for study, not using correct language. Persons who cannot repeat a single arbitrary rule from any grammar, may yet, by the use of a little common sense and attention to the conversation of those of their acquaintances who do speak well, soon acquire a proper use of words and sentences.

There are few men and women of such dull comprehension that they do not know when they use vulgarisms—sentences, expressions, and names, never used by modest and refined people; these disgusting errors, then, by self-watchfulness, may be completely conquered. Slang, too, is not liable to be mistaken for pure and right English by any persons of moderate clear intellect, and the use of it should be studiously avoided.

Frequent use of interjections should be corrected, and all such sentences as "please your honor," "don't you know," "you know," "I guess so," "I reckon," and by-words should be left unuttered.

Of very frequent occurrence are such horrible sentences as—"Ain't you going to stay with us?" for "Aren't you going to stay with us?" "Ain't he coming here?" for "Isn't he coming here?" "Ain't I to have that book?" for "Am I not to have that book?" Any person possessed of ever so small an amount of common sense must see that *ain't* cannot stand for *are not*, *am not*, and *is not*; and that it is an incorrect corruption to use for any one of those expressions. *Aren't*, *isn't*, *doesn't*, *can't*, *shan't*, *won't*, etc., are admissible ways for shortening negative forms of verbs in ordinary conversation; but even the use of these is avoided as much as possible by good speakers.

Often we hear *don't* used indiscriminately for *does not* and *do not*; *won't* for *would not* and *will not*; errors easily righted by a moment's thought. *Hain't*, *tain't*, *his'n*, *your'n*, *their'n*, *our'n*, *oncet*, *daren't*, *mayn't*, *more'n*, are all extremely improper words. Then there are persons who say *git* for *get*, *set* for *sat*, *kin* for *can*, *set* for *sit*, *lay* for *lie*, *done* for *do*, *across* for *across*, *knowed* for *knew*, *drownded* for *drowned*, *drownded* for *drew*, *sew* for *saw*, *ris* for *rise*, from mere carelessness; and so annoy refined ears beyond expression by a habit that may be speedily corrected by the exercise of a little patience and resolution.

Persons frequently forget that one of two things cannot be best; there must be three, or more, things among which to choose a best one; so in speaking of two articles, or persons, be careful to say "I like the red flag the better," or "I like Sarah the better," also when you use *neither* or *not* in a sentence, do not forget that *nor* instead of *or* must follow, as "Neither Jennie nor May are coming." "I cannot sing nor play." You cannot use *between* in regard to more than two objects, but *among* refers to three or more.

Another common mistake is the use of adjectives to qualify verbs, when adverbs only are correct. It is a frequent but ugly error to say "A person sings beautiful," "dances nice," "behaves sweet;" instead of beautifully, nicely, sweetly.

Many persons make shameful blunders in the pronunciation of the most common names and words. Mary is not *Merry*, but *Mary*; and Sarah is not *Sary*. Words terminating in *ment* are pronounced that way, and not *mun*; and words ending in *ing* are not *in*; nor are words ending in *ure*, *chure*. *Rinse* is not *rene*; nor *sparagus*, *sparrougrass*; nor *musk-melon*, *mush-melon*; nor *savage*, *sassage*; nor *vegetables*, *sass*; nor *homely*, *humby*; nor *engine*, *ingine*; nor *kettle*, *kitlle*; nor *fellow*, *feller*; nor *for*, *fur*; nor *boil*, *bile*; nor *bristles*, *bruytes*. Words commencing with a *v* are not pronounced as if spelled with a *v*.

A lady who moves in excellent and educated society told me, lately, that she attempted to use the word *quoit* before her clergyman, and suddenly became conscious that she did not know how to pronounce it. If every family would keep a dictionary—if even a tiny one—upon the table in the room most used, and refer to it concerning every word that they are doubtful as to how to pronounce, such awkwardnesses would soon be corrected.

If you cannot cure yourself of mistakes otherwise, ask your friends to remind you of every inelegance, slang, mispronunciation, and grammatical inaccuracy you use, and immediately repeat the offending sentence in pure, chaste English. And let every young man and young woman, and every elderly man and elderly woman, seek to speak the English language faultlessly.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

What We Do Not Make Heroes of.

THE other day I took up a story by Thos. Bailey Aldrich, in which I found a little topic for an essay. The author was relating the adventures of a boy who came near losing his life by the explosion of a barrel, under which some powder had been placed, to celebrate the "glorious Fourth of July." He wrote: "I recovered sufficiently from my injuries to be taken to school, where for a little while I was looked upon as a hero on account of being blown up;" then he quietly asks: "What don't we make a hero of?"

We don't make heroes of a great many persons whom we should. We don't make them of persons who, day after day, month after month, and year after year, are confined to their sick rooms with incurable diseases, but who bear their burdens cheerfully, never murmuring or repining, let the pain be ever so acute. Yet there is real heroism in this resignation; it requires true heroism to bear sickness without complaining, and yet we don't make heroes of them!

We don't make heroes of those parents who are slighted and churlishly treated by their children, and who yet continue to do their duty by them, forgetting the slights and forgiving the neglect, loving those who give no love in return, working their lives out for others' comfort, never tiring with doing good—though repaid so miserably; never weary, and only dying when thoroughly worn out. Does it not require courage and heroism to give a kiss for a blow? How few of us can bring ourselves to do that; it is heroic, yet we don't make heroes of those whose self-sacrifice is so ceaseless—whose devotion is so unselfish.

We don't make heroes of those who go from door to door inquiring into the welfare of their neighbors, leaving words of cheer here, carrying sunshine there, spreading comfort all around, giving what little they have to spare in the way of money—almost too little to be noticed save by the eye of the Omnipotent. Perhaps if the amount were millions it might look large to the eye of the world but not to God's. We might think it heroic to give away millions, but there is generally more heroism in those who give away the little sums. Those who give millions can well afford it; they feel no deprivation nor stint themselves on that account, and yet we make heroes of them; but for those who have little to give, and for what they give they must deprive themselves of comforts and necessities, we have no record. It requires much heroism to go without needed articles in order to give to others more needy, but who, ever thought of making heroes of them?

We don't make heroes of the hardy workers of the world who delve in the earth, who sail on the sea, or who keep the wheels of life turning smoothly; of the thousands who are toiling and are more fit to be in their beds at rest than wearing out hands and brain, and doing so because they desire to keep their loved ones from starvation.

Oh, these workers lives but be published we should see who the real heroes and heroines of the world are; how bright would their deeds shine and how near akin to saints would many of them appear; but now we merely say—do we always feel the words we utter—"God pity the poor." God does pity them, and it is His pity and strength that supports them and encourages them to strive on.

We don't make heroes of the brave lads who are thirsting for knowledge, but who are obliged to leave college, academy or school to carve their own way by mental labor. To have a thorough education has been the ambition of these lads' lives, and it requires great heroism to give up one's ambition and the hopes that intelligence always inspires.

It seems to me that they deserve more credit than they receive; their examples should serve as models to others. It is better and nobler to struggle on without repining than to sit on the highway and weep because things have turned out differently from what we expected, or because we cannot have our own way in everything.

Don't think to find all your heroes among those whose words and deeds are trumpeted abroad. Seek for them among the humblest classes, in the toiling million.

Ah, there are many true heroes dwelling "far from the maddening crowd" whose deeds are not penned by earthly hands, but who have their record written above in the great book of life.

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Henry Hudson.

THIS renowned discoverer of the Hudson river was born in the city of Amsterdam, though his parents were Dutch. He spoke the Dutch language with great fluency. His enemies always accused him of belonging to the low Dutch; on such occasions he would get his Dutch up high and proceed to show that he was High Dutch in a worthy manner.

The greatest part of his life was spent as a sea-captain on the blue waters of the Holland canals, making stormy voyages between Amsterdam and Rotterdam. (I touch these last syllables lightly for fear I might have some readers who do not belong to church.)

His famous canal-boat, from its resemblance to the crescent, was named the Half Moon. It was low amidships and high at the bow and stern, modeled after a Holland shoe.

He was looked upon as an able navigator by everybody of that country, and never humbled himself to anything but a low bridge.

When he would approach a town the people were aroused by the terrific toots of his horn, and they would exclaim—"Ich du leifer! Here comes dot Heinrich Hudson again any more," and they would go down to welcome him into the harbor, and there was not one of them too proud to refuse to take a glass of lager with him at his expense. He always had plenty of it in the hold. He had a faint idea that it was made to drink, and looked upon it when it was red; it was always ready. As he was nearly as tall as he was wide, he had an endless capacity for stowage, and people used to remark on gazing at his proportions, "Dot was a trafficking beer-cellar."

His face was jolly and round, and on his head, which was as bald as a hotel clothes-brush, he wore a peaked hat to resemble a beer-funnel. The most prominent and constant feature on his face was a short-handled clay pipe whose vestal fire never went down, so that when people saw his gallant craft going by they imagined it was a steamboat.

One day, when the mules were feeding in a dead-calm, while the mules were feeding in the Half Moon lay at anchor, and dreamed of a river of lager beer in the lately-discovered New World, with the banks lined with pretzel-trees. He took a sudden notion to go and discover it for the benefit of the people who lived in New York, and when he was awakened by

a jerk on the tow-line, he told his dream to the crew and got them to consent to go with him.

He provisioned the Half Moon for a year's voyage with lager beer, pretzels, Holland gin and Limberger cheese, Rhine wine and switzer cheese, Scheid—m schnaps and sour kroust, and set sail.

But a mutiny arose among the crew at the start. They said they did not mind to cross the ocean, but they did not want to get out of sight of the shore. They looked out to the western horizon and said there was no land, certainly, in that direction, and if they went out to that verge they would slip off. Altogether they preferred to go by land. They knew there was nothing beyond the horizon because they saw the sun go down behind it; besides, it looked too wet over there, and they said a storm might strike the Half Moon and make a full moon of it, or break it in two and make it a quarter-moon.

It took all the persuasion and lager at his command to induce the crew to give up their fears; they said they would rather give up anything else, but they kept on under protest and a full head of sail.

Day after day did the doughty navigator sit on the stern of his vessel, smoking his pipe, and taking in lager beer for ballast; day after day the sun rose and the lager went down, and ever his eagle eye was bent forward anxiously looking for land.

The crew got uneasy and the old salt himself would have given a thousand dollars an acre for the poorest land he could get to see.

The sailors declared that the other side of the sea had all been washed away.

As time went on fast and the Half Moon went on slow, even Heinrich himself began to wonder if he hadn't crossed the river he was hunting, in the night, without discovering it; but he said he wouldn't give out till the lager did, and when any of the crew threatened to leave and go back, he would say: "Go West, young man, and grow mit the country oop."

Days passed away like a barrel of pretzels and their spirits went down with the Holland gin. The prospect of ever going to any place except the skies was saddening.

Henry did not really care so much for the land as he did for the river, and he smoked his thoughtful pipe in silence and doubt.

But, one day a cry of "land" roused up Henry from a melancholy doze on deck, and everybody was so overjoyed that they took three glasses apiece—spy-glasses, of course—to be sure they were right; and before night the little Half Moon entered New York bay without being boarded by a custom-house officer, and discovered the river which had been waiting so long to be discovered.

Henry was welcomed on Manhattan Island by the savages with a speech, replete with friendship, but it was not printed in the morning papers. The compliment was returned in the loftiest Dutch which Henry could command, and then he treated, and everybody got—what was expected. This was the first drunk on the island, and it is occasionally celebrated there, to this day.

Hudson afterward sailed up the river in the direction of Albany, but couldn't find the town, and returned and established a brewery on Manhattan Island, from which rivers of beer flowed, soothing the gentle savage breast. He served as alderman for some years and afterward went back to Holland, which he found to be still occupied by the Dutch.

The question naturally arises, if he had not discovered the Hudson river how would the people of New York do without it? Let us draw a veil over the question, and leave the answer to scientific men. He left it when he went back. This river prevents Jersey City from encroaching on New York.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

Governor Vance, of North Carolina, attributes the destruction of the pure agricultural fair system to horse-racing, three-card monte and prize candy.

The baa constrictor in the New York Aquarium lately gave birth to fifty small boas, an occurrence without a precedent in this country. The mother is thirteen feet, and her young are about two feet in length.

At the Paris Exhibition there will be given for agricultural and industrial products, collectively, 100 grand prizes, 1,000 gold medals, 4,000 silver, 8,000 bronze, and 8,000 "honorable mentions." The sum devoted to defray the expense of awards is \$300,000. It is to be hoped no riot or revolution will break up the great exposition.

Skeptics who insist that the forty days' fast in the wilderness was a physical impossibility will not be prepared to believe that Dr. Tanner, of Minneapolis, Minn., has lived on water for forty-two days. He states that he was anxious to prove that human life could be prolonged without the use of any nourishment whatever, and began his fast under the eyes of an associate physician, who examined him frequently and kept a record of all the symptoms. For forty-two days he remained without food, taking a walk every day in the open air, and a swallow of water whenever inclination prompted. On the fortieth day he walked out to Lake Cedar and drank too much cold water, in consequence of which the action of his heart was weakened so that not the faintest trace of pulsation could be discovered at the wrist. These symptoms soon disappeared, and on the last day of his fast, although he had lost eighteen pounds in weight, he felt so strong and well that he was confident he could hold out for two weeks longer. On returning to his feed he ate sparingly at first, but soon had to blunt his voracious appetite. Whereunto, and unto much more of life import, he is willing to make oath and affix his seal.

Ex-Senator Chandler had something wise to say about farming as well as something significant about politics, when he addressed his neighbors at his farm in Michigan not long ago. He declared that farming was not only the oldest but most respectable occupation known to man. "If I had a boy-to-day," he exclaimed, "I would rather put him on an eighty-acre lot that had never had a plow or an ax upon it, than place him in the best Government office in the land!" Agricultural papers will please copy that remark, and farmers' lads, who are growing up dissatisfied with country life and who cannot overcome a restless desire to go to a city and enter a profession will do well to remember it. "Make your homes pleasant," continued the ex-senator. "Make them so attractive that your sons and daughters will love their homes better than any other place on God's earth. Make this business of farming so agreeable that your sons will see that it is the most healthful and profitable occupation in which they can engage. Build good houses and buy good implements. Don't get an old cracked cook-stove, but put in a good range. In fact, have every convenience that you can, so that your wives and daughters will deem it a pleasure to perform their household work. In this way you can bring up your sons and daughters on the farm; but when you make the home repulsive, you drive them into clerkships and other menial positions, when they ought to be God's anointed lords of creation." These are plain words, but they are crammed with hard sense.

Readers and Contributors.

Declined: "Agnes Rowan," "Acrostic," "The Old and the New Year," "Tired of Writing," "Speak Not the Lie," "Mrs. Dady's Surprise," "The Loss of the Good-Heart," "Over the Century," "Weep Not for Him," "The Spouter," "Morris or Harris," "A Novel Speculation."

Accepted: "Farmer Brown's New Year," "The Senechal," "Jane Shore," "The Jolly Old Fellow," "Adieu," "Irish Lullaby," "A Pen Friend," "Sweet Spirit, Come," "Dora the Second," "Maidie Did," "The Poppy Dream," "A New Way to Conquer," "In Clover."

E. E. D. We hope you never will find what you seek.

LOVE. See articles on "The Holidays," now appearing in this paper.

M. J. A. Poem rather trite. The same idea has been poetized innumerable times.

LILLIE S. Poem fine. Tarsa, expressive, complete. We thank for such offerings, for they merit it.

JACK FROST. Have answered your query many times. Ask any druggist for a wash of sulphate of zinc.

ENIGMA. Of the several systems of phonography Pitman's and Munson's are most in use. Obtain their books through D. Appleton & Co., New York.

ERUNCE. No reason whatever why you should not color your own ribbons and garments and thus save the expense and outrageous charges of the dyers. See the Dime Housewife's Manual for all kinds of recipes for household uses.

HENRIETTA N. The calls Lily flowers but once, though three or four bulbs in a bunch will have as many flowers. The flower is really not a flower but a leaf on the end of a seed-stalk. Water the pot very freely. The soil must be a good driving soil.

JOHN THE YOUNGER. Dime Dialogues No. 20 contains several such pieces as you ask for—"just the thing for a boys' exhibition." We know of no set of standard dramas adapted to schools. They cannot be adapted to such uses, demanding as they do a stage, scene scenery and accessories, costumes, etc., etc.

OLD SUN, Atlanta. You can well afford to wait, for both are young. No woman is a woman in fact and feeling and judgment until she is twenty. The parents very properly object to your attentions. Wait for three years, at least, for your or their best interests.—Your writing and spelling both demand study and practice.

D. G. M. Have forwarded your complaint to the Magnetic Watch Company. We, of course, know nothing about the matter. While we do not knowingly insert the advertisements of irresponsible parties, we cannot and do not abrogate any advertiser. Readers must be their own sole judges as to the propriety of sending money to any advertiser.

JENNIE'S P. The winter-banking up of celery in the garden rows is a great deal of unnecessary trouble. Lift all the plants now. Make a pit, twenty inches deep. Put the plants in it, roots down, closely packed side by side, standing in rows about three inches apart—just enough to put a thin wall of earth between each row. Fill up the pit close to top of plants. Then cover with boards snugly, and as the cold strengthens, cover over the boards with earth. When any celery is wanted, dig into the pit and it will be found fine, crisp and easily removed.

"WAGER." You have lost your bet. The quotation, "Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave," is not from Shakespeare, but your friend is in error as well, for the words are from the Bible. We do not approve of bets, but if you wish to pay yours, think of some pretty gift you can make for the gentleman; he will value the present more if it is the work of your hands, and many tasteful articles may be made for two dollars—a handkerchief or glove-receiver, a collar-box, cuff-box, set of tidies, traveling strap, etc.

MAIME D. T. Buttermilk is a most dirty and disagreeable cosmetic to use, and we never saw a person benefited by it. If the freckles are very large and dark use nitre and glycerine; nitre is pure saltpetre. Moisten your face with the glycerine, and with a fine brush apply the powder to the spots. Small freckles we would advise you not to meddle with. Most of the washes and cosmetics sold by druggists injure the complexion far more than they improve it. Plenty of air, sunshine, exercise and cold water, with a careful diet, will give you a nice skin than all the lotions you can buy.

MOLLIE J. S. Never write to a gentleman when you are ashamed to have your best friend know of it; he surely is not a person fit for your acquaintance. Girls should be able to stand on their own feet, and much respect, to allow any man to seek or continue their acquaintance surreptitiously. You may think there is "some fun" in such things, now; but there will, inevitably, come a time when you will regret that you had not always been a truly high-minded, dignified young lady. A good rule for every young girl to adopt, is never to write to a man that she would be ashamed for her mother and father to know of.

DOCTOR JOHN. Prof. Asaph Hall's address is Washington Observatory, Washington, D. C.—The two moons of Mars are only to be seen when the earth and Mars are nearest in their orbits, and then only can be detected by the most powerful refractors. For the good reason that the satellites are very small—about ten and twenty-five miles in diameter, only mere specks to the astronomer. They are not only curious but exceedingly disconcerting phenomena—starting new questions of astronomy and proving conclusively that we really know but little of the facts that govern planetary and axial motion.—We know of no better publication for your use than the *Popular Science Monthly*.

ADVISOR. If you promised the bracelet under certain stipulations you may wait until the lady announces that they are fulfilled; then you must in honor redeem your promise. The lady should have no hesitancy in asking for a bracelet, and in writing letter, telling you when and how she carried out your wishes.—About the visit let her brother arrange the matter in his own way; it will probably be most agreeable to all. The restraints which the "usages of good society" impose on ladies will not prevent her co-operation with her brother in carrying out the plan for a good time during the holidays.—The poem is very well timed and will be used. You write a neat, graceful hand.

JENNIE S. M. To make a handsome lamp-shade, quite as soft in the light it produces, and far more beautiful in effect than the ordinary shade, you may use a fine stiff quality of drawing-paper; you can cut it and join it, so that it will exactly fit upon the frame used for the chandeliers and pendant lamps, or argand burners. Having pinned and firmly secured it at three, or four, equal distances arrange a bouquet of small, pressed ferns and leaves, with one or two but-terflies (such as are used for book-ornaments) as well as deep in hue as possible and the leaves very brilliant; if varnished, after they are glued in place, they will retain their color better. Cover with fine, satin-finished white paper, or thin white lining silk, or fine white net, and bind with white or gilt paper at top or bottom; the effect, over a lighted lamp, is delightful. Write on the inside of the shade two thin sheets of glass—the same size and glue fine white shreds of paper on one side of each. Upon one piece of glass arrange your ferns and leaves, and lay the other piece of glass upon it. Bind the two glasses firmly together with ribbon and glue, and add a loop to hang it from the window frame. The effect is that of ground glass.

ELLA GEARY writes: "Will you please tell me if it is proper to send written invitations to our friends to call on you New Year Day? If so, what is the form? Should one set a table, and what are the proper things to have? Will you tell me, will make a pretty suit for New Year, for a tall, plump, fair girl; it must not cost over a hundred dollars." Ladies send out New Year invitations, but printed or engraved ones are almost entirely banished, now, for callers, and that is a sensible innovation upon the olden customs.—A salmon-colored silk, handsomely made and trimmed with garlands of roses shading to deepest red, is a very elegant dress and will do nicely for a party-dress; but if you wish a still more serviceable dress, black silk and black velvet combined, and lightened with floral garnitures, will be quite as dressy as need be; also any of the dark new shades of silk, made up for a street suit, may be rendered quite gay enough for the occasion by adding light ribbons to it, or long vines of roses or any bright flowers.

E. E. D. Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

STAR OF MY SOUL.
A LOVE SONG.

BY EREN E. REKFORO.

Star of my soul, shine on me in thy splendor,
Lean o'er thy casement's rose-encircled bar;
My Heaven is in thine eyes, so darkly tender,
My soul is like a sea, and thou its star.
The ocean mirrors in its tranquil bosom
A world of stars, but I have only thee.
Oh, radiant face, beam on me like a blossom,
The one sweet blossom of the world to me.
Star of my soul, oh, sweet, fair star,
The wind sings at thy casement bar;
My heart is singing at thy feet,
And all the world, because of thee, is sweet.

Star of my soul, if I might climb and kiss thee,
With my heart's passion brimming on my mouth,
Thenceforth in absent moments thou wouldst
Miss me.
As roses miss the sweet wind from the south,
And then I know that I might win and wear thee
Forevermore upon my faithful heart;
If thou couldst only know the love I bear thee,
Not death nor fate could keep our souls apart.
Star of my soul, oh, sweet, fair star,
The wind sings at thy casement bar;
My heart is singing at thy feet,
And all the world, because of thee, is sweet.

A Woman's Scorn.

BY LUCILLE HOLLES.

It was a dainty envelope—the palest shade of green, monogrammed in deeper green, and faintly perfumed, and superscribed in a fine, womanish hand—that Finley Arbutnot toyed with, as he sat at his late breakfast opposite his lady mother.

"Well, Finley, that envelope seems to hold a special fascination for you. Of course, you know that you may be excused if you desire to open it."

"Thanks, mother; but there is no reason why I should honor this communication beyond any that I receive. I prefer to make business await its appointed hour. I was only speculating concerning the theory that chirography is indicative of character, and assuming the theory correct, for the nonce, wondering how nearly right I am in my interpretation of the character herein prefigured."

"May I see it a minute? Thank you. Now tell me what you read here."

"Considerable talent, hardly genius, I think, and an equal amount of vanity. Pride without power, passion without depth, purpose without will, decided indications of weakness and indecision. Am I right, think you?"

"Not as I have read, but I doubt if you are not slightly influenced by personal knowledge of the writer."

"Possibly! I certainly have met the writer; but I should like to hear your interpretation, if you will confer the favor."

"I should say there was a great deal of power, and will, in the person who penned these lines, and an immense ability to subject emotions to a rigid mental custody. At all events, Finley, there is a terrible reserve force somewhere in this nature, and playing with fire occasionally proves dangerous, you know."

The lady gave the signal for leaving the table, and the slender, dark-faced man smiled as he gathered up his mail and made his way to the library. This had been the Arbutnot boys' special sanctum; they had shared it together, each having his own desk, and table, and private chair, and all appliances for work or pleasure; and now that the boys were men, and one had voluntarily gone forth, forever, from his cozy, luxurious home, the room was sacred to Finley. No one ever invaded this place without its master's permission, and here he spent his mornings, attending to his correspondence and giving play to his fanciful and sometimes vividly strong imagination that had won for him considerable of fame and money. The envelope that Mr. Arbutnot selected to open first this morning was the pale green one, with its delicate, womanish superscription. The letter read:

"MY DEAR FRIEND:

"The letter you kindly sent me last week deserved, at least, an acknowledgment. Forgive me, if you can—though I feel that those three last words are entirely unnecessary—that I have so long ignored its arrival. I can only say of its advice—and to you can I say more?—that no matter what entanglements I may have drawn about myself, no matter what pain may result from my decision, let come what will, I will follow it; I will never give my hand where my heart cannot follow; I will not commit matrimonial suicide! Cases enough forerunners of human hearts to investigate with me, adding mine to the list. Better no marriage than an imperfect one. See how like you—excuse me—how philosophical am I growing to be! I will see you Wednesday, if you wish it. Suppose you call for me and we will walk together."

MARGUERITE LINN.

Finley Arbutnot smiled a self-satisfied, quizzical smile, and stroked his long mustache.

"She has been a pretty little bit of study, that girl; but I flatter myself I know her thoroughly now. It was not such a sad thing after all that I put an end to the nonsense between her and Jack. She would not have had enough influence over him to have done him any good. He is bound to go to the bad, anyway; best to save her from sharing his fate. He has precisely the little of the Arbutnot money to run through with, now; he could not have supported a wife, even if he had brought her here, to stay in the home the Lowrie wealth provides while mother lives. And now I must keep Marguerite from marrying any one else out of pique. There is no use in her throwing herself away—if only I were rich—but nonsense; I shall not want a wife yet, this many a year, not while I can live here, luxuriously, and go on in my own way; and, after all this is changed, the woman I marry must have money."

And so this man with the changeable gray eyes that could look such unutterable tenderness or such calculating selfishness, the tawny-faced, handsome man, on whom so much of physical and mental good had been lavished, lightly sketched his bright destiny, filling in the present with the ruin and a girl's broken heart and betrayed faith.

And Marguerite Linn! A fragile girl, perfect of form, graceful of movement, with a tintless oval face, pure and soft like an infant's, and as full of changing expressions as a cloudy day is full of shifting lights, and great enchanting violet eyes, deepening in anger under their dark straight brows and long fringe-like lashes to a cloudy black; a girl in every way delightful to men of luxurious, aesthetic tastes. A girl—yet she had lived two and twenty years, to that time of life which finds many of her sex fully developed into womanhood; but hers was not a nature to mature early; it was one of tropical character, born in a calm of circumstances and chilliness of climate that tended to render its expansion and perfection a matter of years; and, perhaps, Finley Arbutnot had hardly mastered the mystery of Marguerite's being when he thought he had so thoroughly triumphed in the study he had made of her.

Yet, she had loved Jack Arbutnot, and now loved his brother—was that a proof that Finley had read her character rightly when he had attributed to it weakness and indecision?

"Marguerite, I have come as you wrote that I might; but instead of going to walk I am going to take you home with me. Not an excuse, please! Here is an invitation from my mother; and you will be sure to like her. There is no company at the house, and we shall have a few quiet, delightful days together. You will get ready?"

"Mr. Arbutnot, I hardly dare to say yes, though—"

"I say it for you, then! Come, Daisy, I shall wait for you, and you must spare my patience as much of a trial as possible."

Marguerite started.

"Daisy?"

"Don't you like that name, little girl? You know I am old enough to be allowed a trifling abatement of stern formality?"

"Oh, it's not that; only do not call me Daisy; Jack called me that."

"And so it is sacred. You are mourning for him yet, poor child." Finley let his hand move caressingly over her bronze-hued hair, as he softly murmured his words and pity.

"No; you will persist in mistaking me, Mr. Arbutnot. I am not mourning for your brother, and I do not want your pity, only—"

she paused, but not shyly, dreamily, as if her thoughts had flown so far ahead of her words that she had forgotten she was speaking.

"Only what, Marguerite?"

She glanced up frankly, and the violet eyes were very earnest:

"Only your friendship."

"You know that that is yours unalterably, little girl. Now prove if it gains a fair exchange by getting ready to go with me."

They were delighted days that Marguerite Linn spent with Finley Arbutnot in Mrs. Lowrie's beautiful home. Finley's mother was sweetly gracious to her son's protegee, and the girl idled the hours away in luxurious indolence, while Finley talked to her or read with her, and feasted his senses on her dreamy graces of motion, her physical beauty, and a vague, tantalizing shadow of southern passion in her manners like a low, sweet, scarcely perceptible undertone pulsing through a piece of music. And those days were only the beginning of two years of the same aesthetic, untrifled, pleasurable association.

Mr. Arbutnot never really made love to the girl Marguerite; treating her always like a tender elder brother, it was satisfaction enough to this man, who was fond of keeping existence full of the most pleasurable sensations, to see how surely and strongly she gravitated toward him. Neither had he spurred her on to anything more than the light literary achievements she had commenced and continued under his tutelage. Had he done either, the end of those days must have come sooner. But he knew that to do the one must terminate this intimacy that was so pleasing to him, and to do the other was to usher a very fair rival upon the field of his own profession. And so this woman's life, that another's selfishness had kept undeveloped so long, bloomed into the fullness of its torrid nature with a suddenness and pain that startled him.

Finley Arbutnot met an aristocratic, wealthy woman whom his tender gray eyes, and handsome, tawny face, and literary reputation fascinated. Here was a chance to assure to himself a continuance of that luxury to which his mother's use of her second husband's property had accustomed him from boyhood; moreover, he was not unconscious of the fact that Miss Converse, without money even, was a woman any man might be proud to win for a wife.

And Marguerite Linn must be told this. He was not a coward to shrink from the performance of this necessity, or, perhaps, he had miscalculated its effects.

At Mrs. Lowrie's request, instigated by her son, the girl came for a day and night to Starwood. The afternoon had been spent in riding along the golden and flame-hung autumn streets, and the evening in literary gossip, lounging in Turkish comfort before the flaming grate fire. The hour was late, and the hostess had already said good-night, and a soft, idle silence had fallen in the scarlet-curtained room.

Finley was wondering how he should word his news, and if he should not miss, more than he had reckoned, this girl's presence out of his life.

"Marguerite."

She stirred indolently, turning her handsome eyes upon his face.

"Yes?"

"Will you congratulate me? I am to be married in a few weeks, and the next time we meet here I shall be able to introduce you to my wife."

The great eyes darkened into a perfect fury of blackness; the scarlet lips curved in wondering scorn; the beautifully pale face grew deathly white; but the girl only rose and left Arbutnot alone in the terrible silence.

"So she has gone to have it out alone in her room. I only hope she will not make a scene in the morning, or come down with— Good heavens!"

Marguerite glided through the hall arrayed in cloak and bonnet. Finley sprang to the door she was unfastening, and dragged her into the room.

"Marguerite, where are you going? What does this mean?"

"Take your hand off me!" she cried, in a passion. "I am going home! Do you think I would stay under the same roof with you, a moment longer?"

"And we have been such friends, little girl!" Arbutnot commenced, reproachfully, in his soft voice. "Are you angry at your friend because he is going to marry? Did you never think that, like other men, he might do that one day?"

"No! I counted you better than other men! You once begged me not to commit matrimonial suicide, and I never believed you would do it! I am the only woman who can be your perfect wife. Your whole future will prove it. Your nature will ceaselessly cry out for me, to fill its needs; you love me!"

Perhaps some consciousness of the truth stung him and evoked his sarcasm.

"Have I ever told you so?"

"Not in words; they were not needed! You know I was yours, heart and soul; and that by every sacred tie of the affinity that exists between us, you belong to me. You have proved yourself weak, selfish, villainous, and I despise you utterly!"

She turned to go, but Finley attempted still to detain her.

"You cannot go out alone, at this hour; and there is no train."

"There are carriages to be got. I am not afraid—not nearly as afraid as I would be to stay near such as you. Stand out of my way!"

And with that she left him, for there was that in her voice that made him obedient to her for the first time in their two lives.

And Finley Arbutnot married Miss Converse, and a year passed by; and then, one day, his wife brought him a magazine in which his own name was signed at the end of one sketch and Marguerite Linn Arbutnot at the end of another.

"What does it mean, dearest? Is she related to you? Has she wonderful talent—more than that, real genius?"

"I do not know, Mathilde. I cannot understand it. I know a Marguerite Linn; could she have married my brother Jack? He has not been heard of in years—and she did not love him! She wrote but occasionally, for third-rate journals; but this, you say, is a fine sketch."

"The finest thing I have ever read, in its line, excepting always my pet's writings, which, you know, I regard with jealousy partial eyes."

But Mrs. Arbutnot's partiality, nor Finley's egoism could long refuse to acknowledge the masterly power and artistic beauty that made the writings of the new authoress sought for by a public gone wild with enthusiasm over her mighty genius. Even Finley could gain no knowledge as to this woman, whose talents were so far beyond his own that he was debarred from any attempt at rivalry, until, one evening, with his wife, he attended a select and brilliant reception given to welcome a distinguished foreigner to America, and a young gentleman joined the group among which they stood, crying gayly:

"I have what any person here would be proud to own—the autograph of Margaret Linn Arbutnot! She has written to say that the sudden indisposition of her husband renders her presence here to-night an impossibility."

"Oh, let us see the writing," cried a dozen voices, and a pale-green envelope—not faintly, but passionately sweet of perfume—passed from eager hand to hand, and came at last to the man who had often held just such dainty tinsel trappings. The superscription was written in a bold, clear style, devoid of any attempt at ornamentation, a hand strangely powerful and controlled, yet wonderfully like to a finer chirography that Finley Arbutnot had known so well and analyzed with such supreme self-conceit; the very likeness made the man tremble, for he had learned how wholly his nature craved the companionship of the woman it recalled, how utterly unmarried, in soul, he was to the woman he called wife—and whose very worship of himself irritated him.

"What a passionately strong, proud woman she must be—how full her nature of depths and heights of feeling unattainable by ordinary mortals," said Mathilde, as her husband passed back the precious envelope; and Finley cursed himself, in his heart, as he remembered how differently he had interpreted Marguerite's chirography.

The next day Mr. Arbutnot was called out of town for a brief season. At his return, Mathilde was not present to greet him as usual, and he went direct to his study. A pile of correspondence awaited him, and the first letter was incased in the envelope and superscribed in the hand of Marguerite Linn Arbutnot. He tore it open feverishly. It read:

"Your brother, my husband, is dying, and wishes to see the man who ruined him. Are you brave enough to come? He will not curse you; he knows that your life must be already a perpetual curse; neither will I—though I feel so inclined when I know how I could have saved bright, honorable life from ruin, if you had not come between your lie to me that Jack was false, and your lie to Jack that you loved me. I have tried to atone to him during the past months—for what he has suffered—but you have tricked him of all good—the love he might have had, the honorable career he might have attained, the life that might have spared him his life! He desires to see the brother who was his idol."

"188—STREET."

Arbutnot stood up, irresolutely, his hat in one hand, and Marguerite's damning words in the other, and the door opened and admitted his wife. She was just come in from the street, and there was that in her face that told Finley a horrible something had come between them.

"You need not go," she said, a few womanish tears trickling down her cheeks. "Your brother is dead, and buried. I have come to say good-bye, until you can make arrangements to leave this house. Of course we cannot live together now. I have ceased to respect a man that committed matrimonial suicide and married me solely for wealth."

"What has Marguerite told you?"

"Nothing. Her new book is out, and when I read it I knew all; and when I went with the messenger sent to fetch you to your brother's death-bed, I could do nothing!"

She waited a minute as if to give this man she had so loved a chance to say some word in extenuation of his selfishness and heartlessness; but when he did not speak she went from his presence, as virtually widowed for life as the other Mrs. Arbutnot who this night was so triumphantly avenged; and Finley Arbutnot misses many of the luxuries he was wont to enjoy, and working hard for those he has, freshly sees two women, whose love was once his own, pass him in their carriages as he goes to the publishers who dare to cut him down to lower pay, while they accept, on her own terms, any manuscript signed Marguerite Linn Arbutnot.

A Heart History;
OR,
BLIND BARBARA'S SECRET.

BY MARY GRACE HALPINE.

AUTHOR OF "THE MISSING BRIDEGROOM,"
"THE HUSBAND OF TWO WIVES," "WHO WAS GUILTY?" "ELSIE'S PRISONER,"
"WHOSE WIFE WAS SHE?" "THE DIVORCED WIFE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH STEPHEN SHOWS HIS HAND.

The days that followed were very busy and happy ones to Irva, almost too busy for her to have time to think.

Stephen took her to all the sights of the city; to the Park, to Greenwood, to art galleries and various places of amusement. There was never a day that they did not go somewhere, and seldom an evening.

Mrs. Haverstraw generally accompanied them; Irva took care to have it understood that she expected this, and Stephen did not feel so sure of his ground as to think it prudent to run counter to her wishes in a point like this. But that lady was very discreet, and contrived to make her presence as little apparent as possible; she being conveniently blind and deaf to what was passing around her.

The distrust that Irva had felt and evinced for Stephen had melted away beneath the gentle deference of his manner and the fair outside view he presented. She no longer avoided him, or treated him with reserve when they met. She laughed and chatted with him, expressing her opinions with girlish frankness on all that she saw and heard.

But there was something in this very frankness that annoyed Stephen, the unconsciousness with which she showed him her whole heart let him see that he held no special place there.

In spite of the innocent freedom of her manner, there was a point beyond which he dared not go. He was shrewd enough to see that the privileges accorded him were based upon her

unconsciousness of evil, not her toleration of it; that if her suspicions were once aroused, he could deceive her no more. He knew that Irva had a character and mental caliber beyond her years, and that she had a resolute, clear-sighted woman to deal with, if she were once aroused to the danger of her position and knowledge of his true character.

It is safe to say that Stephen did not find the restraints he was forced to put upon himself very easy or palatable. What he called love, and which was, perhaps, as near an approach to it as he was capable of, had grown stronger day by day. It partook of the selfishness and self-will that were inherent in the man, but it was genuine in its quality, and stronger in its degree than anything he had ever before experienced in his life.

In the meantime, Mrs. Haverstraw had had a letter from Mrs. Sutton, stating that Barby was so much improved by the treatment she was having that she should remain where she was for the present.

She made no allusion to Irva, except to hope that she was well and enjoying herself.

Irva had by no means forgotten the romance woven by her busy brain; she had added many a chapter to it from time to time, though it must be owned it was from material that a less active imagination could have made little use of.

One thing, she specially noted, that she rarely expressed a wish or admiration for any article of personal adornment in the presence of Mrs. Haverstraw, but she found it on her bed or table soon after. That that lady was in communication with some friend of hers, whose ability was equal to his love, was clear to her.

And who should this be but the father she so yearned to see—and that Barby had often said would one day claim her!

How long was she to be banished from his presence when would she be able to tell him that all the costly gifts he lavished upon her were nothing compared to his love!

One day, Irva found a beautiful set of sapphires on her dressing-table—the very one she had admired so much at Tiffany's only the day before. She recognized it as soon as she opened the velvet-lined case where it lay.

As she stood looking at it, lost in surprise and admiration, Mrs. Haverstraw entered.

She smiled as she saw what Irva was holding in her hand.

"He who gave you that and all your other beautiful presents, is below, waiting to see you."

Pale, almost breathless with suspense, Irva turned toward the speaker.

"Oh! tell me! is it he, my—"

"I didn't come to answer any questions, child," interrupted Mrs. Haverstraw with an impatient gesture, "but to help you dress. I want you to look as charming as possible. Where is that new silk?"

Bewildered by the thoughts and conjectures that filled her mind, Irva submitted passively to the ministrations of her mother-in-law, as she saw how fair and sweet that vision was; only this thought was there:

"Will my father love me?"

There came a tap at the door.

"There is a gentleman in the parlor waiting to see Mrs. Sutton."

Mrs. Haverstraw smiled.

"He is getting impatient, and no wonder. Come."

Like one in a dream, from which she feared to awaken, Irva descended the stairs.

Mrs. Haverstraw followed close behind.

"Remember," she whispered, "that he who is waiting to see you, is the best and truest friend you have, and receive him as he deserves."

Irva stood for a moment with her hand on the knob of the door, trying to still the throbbing heart, which beat almost to suffocation, and then went in.

It was growing dusk. At the further end of the long drawing-room, she saw the dim outline of a man whose face was turned from her. Attracted by the soft rustle of her trailing robes, he advanced eagerly toward her; pausing when within a few feet of her, as if checked by something he saw in the eyes, and which were fixed upon him with such a look of surprise and disappointment.

"Best of women! how can I sufficiently thank you for this frank and prompt acceptance of my gift, and all the delightful hopes to which it gives rise?"

The blood suddenly receded from Irva's face; glancing around the room, she looked into Stephen's face, as if but dimly comprehending his meaning.

"Your gift?"

"Yes, mine. May I not hope your wearing of it to be a favorable augury in regard to the far more precious gift that I have come to ask at your hands?"

The tone in which this was spoken was very tender and seductive, but it was quite thrown away upon Irva. Indeed, it is doubtful as to whether her mind took in any but one point, the one that alone interested her.

"And I to understand, Mr. Sully, that not only this, but all the gifts I have had, and which I supposed were from—"

Here Irva's feelings overpowered her, and her voice choked.

"Do you mean to tell me, sir," she resumed, "that all I have received during the six weeks I have been here, to be from you?"

"They certainly were," returned Stephen, not a little piqued at Irva's tone and manner. "Who did you suppose they were from?"

"From him, who alone has any right to give me such a—my father?"

"Your father?"

As Stephen looked at Irva, from whose eyes the tears of disappointment and mortification were falling fast, he read, as he never had before, not only how far she was from him, but from all that he would gladly make her.

Not all his arts and blandishments could call forth the slightest approach to any sympathy with the passion that had taken such strong and complete possession of him. She had been dreaming, not of a lover, but a father's love!

To do Stephen justice, the surprise he manifested at this discovery was genuine; he had no idea of the suppositions and illusions with which poor Irva had been deluding herself. The freedom and matter-of-fact way with which she received his presents, had led him to infer, of late, that she supposed they were from Mrs. Sutton; and he fancied that the time had come when he could safely disabuse her of this idea.

He was so puzzled and startled at the result as to hardly know what to do or say, a thing very unusual with him.

"This is a very unfortunate mistake, but you must not blame me for it. I supposed there was, at least, a tacit understanding on your part as to how it was."

The color came back to Irva's cheeks.

"I don't know why you should suppose anything of the sort, Mr. Sully. What right have you to give, or to accept them?"

"The best of all rights—that which my love gives—a love that I never before felt for woman."

Irva looked at the speaker.

For the first time Stephen let his long-suppressed feelings find expression in the eyes that met her own, and the revelation it gave her was as unexpected as a new-born babe.

She knew that Stephen liked and admired her,

but he had been so guarded that any such feeling as this she had never dreamed of. From words dropped by him, as well as Mrs. Haverstraw, she judged his family to be too high to admit of his marrying a portionless, nameless girl, and that he would offer anything less it never entered her innocent heart to conceive.

"You don't know what you are saying."

"I know that I love you, Irva; so madly, so entirely, that there is room for no other thought in my heart!"

"I am sorry."

"Why are you sorry?"

"I think any true woman must feel sorry to have a love proffered her that she cannot return."

"But you don't know that—how can you? You are so innocent and inexperienced that you don't know the capabilities of your own nature. You will love me, in time I will be so true, so devoted, that you cannot help it!"

A faint smile came to Irva's lips. As inexperienced as she was in such matters there was a voice in her heart which told her how fallacious any such hope was.

"If love were a mere effort of the will, it might be so. No, Mr. Sully, you are too good, you have been too kind to me, in many ways, for me to deceive you in so essential a point as this. I can never love you as I ought to love my husband."

It was well for Stephen that the obscure light partially hid his face from view.

There was an indescribable change in his voice as he said:

"I am not good. I do not claim to be worthy of you—there are few men that are. But I do claim to love you. Only trust yourself to me, Irva, and I will make you happy, if it is in the power of mortal man to do it! Just think, my dear girl, what you are rejecting, not only a heart devoted to you, but all the ease and luxury that wealth can give. And then, what will people think?"

"Yes, what will they think? You came to the city with me; you have been living in a furnished house, of which I am known to hold the lease—for, at Mrs. Sutton's request, I took it off her hands. You have been seen daily in my company. You are too unsophisticated to know, Irva, how very censorious the world is."

Irva turned her flashing eyes upon the speaker.

"You knew?"

"Of course I knew. But, good heavens! do you think I would have let you compromise yourself thus, had I supposed, for one moment, that you did not understand my intentions, and approve them?"

"I will leave the house to-morrow morning," cried Irva, rising from her seat. "I would never have come had I known things to be as you have stated."

"Where will you go? Don't act hastily in the matter. You have no idea what a hard world this is to a girl brought up as you have been, and with neither friends, influence, nor money. I forgot to tell you that I wrote to Mrs. Sutton in regard to my love for you. I received a reply this morning, inclosing a letter to you. I beg that you will read it before deciding against me."

Lighting the gas, Stephen placed a chair for Irva near it, and then withdrew to a window, where he stood arranging the folds of the curtain, but stealthily watching her face as she broke the seal of her letter and made herself mistress of its contents.

It looked so pale and troubled before—it was pitiful to see the change half an hour had wrought—that there was no perceptible alteration in it.

Letting it fall into her lap, she sat for some moments with her head over her eyes.

Then rising, she turned toward him.

"I must have time to think this over. How much can I have?"

"As much as you like. Only don't keep me long in suspense."

"I will let you know to-morrow evening, at this hour."

"Irva."

Irva turned her head, as she stood upon the threshold.

"Don't forget the good you may do me, by consenting to share my lot. No other woman ever had, or could have, so much influence over me as you."

CHAPTER XII.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

In a maze of doubts, fears, and conjectures, now thinking she would do so, and now that, the long day wore to a close.

It wanted only half an hour of the time of Stephen's coming.

Mrs. Haverstraw, who had been with her nearly an hour, warning, coaxing, and expostulating, was gone, and she was alone.

Taking up Mrs. Sutton's letter, she re-read it, and looking over her shoulder, let us see what it contains.

It was as follows:

"DEAR IRVA—Stephen's letter, confessing the nature of his feelings for you, was a great relief to me. I have worried about you a great deal, lately. As I am unable to give you a home, or do anything more for you, I really didn't know what was going to become of you."

"I did not think it best to tell you your father's name, as it might make trouble, and could do you no possible good, but under the circumstances I felt justified in making a direct appeal to him in your behalf, to which he has not deigned even to reply. So you see there is no hope on that score."

"But you need not care for that, now; Stephen will provide for you better than he, who probably thinks that he has enough to provide for already."

"You ought to consider yourself a very fortunate girl to have such an offer as this. I hope you won't be so foolish as to reject it. If you do, you will have your own way to make in the world, and a hard way you will find it."

"I leave here on the next train. Do not know where I shall be for several months, at least, as I intend to travel."

"You need have no anxiety concerning Barby, who remains much the same, as I shall make her my special care."

Yours truly,

"LUCIA SUTTON."

Irva had wept many tears over the destruction of her beautiful dreams, and which had seemed so real to her, but there were no tears in her eyes now, but a hard, bitter look, that had never been there before.

Her heart rebelled fiercely at the fate assigned her, the hard and stern realities of a life so different from the one she had pictured.

That life of ease and luxury, its giddy round of pleasures, had had an enervating effect upon her, making more gloomy and repelling what she knew must be hers if she rejected the hand held out to her.

As she sat thus, making fainter and fainter resistance against the temptation that assailed her, some one rapped at the door with a message, whose purport she knew before the words reached her.

Irva paused a moment in front of the mirror; wondering if it could be the same face that looked out upon her the evening before, it wore such a different aspect.

As if fearing that her resolution might falter, she went quickly down the stairs, almost startling Stephen by her sudden appearance, especially when he looked into her face.

She went up directly to him, and holding out her hand, said:

"Mr. Sully, I don't love you. I don't think I ever shall—not in the way you love me. But I don't love any one else, and, if knowing this you care to take me—you can."

Stephen started to his feet.

"Do I care to take you—oh! darling—"

Taking a step backward, Irva raised her hand.

"Stay! I have not finished yet. You say I have already compromised myself; I will not continue to do so. This sort of life must cease. If you want me, you must take me now."

This was, evidently, something that Stephen did not expect.

"My dearest Irva, it could not be too soon for me; but I have told you how it is with certain members of my family. My sister is so averse to my marrying—"

"Then you must choose between us!" interrupted Irva. "You have called me unsophisticated."

that the girl had gone off with you to attend to your sick housekeeper. I knew at once what you were up to, and I determined to follow you at once, for I have made up my mind that you shan't have the girl!"

Again the Saint grew red with rage, and the hand that gripped the revolver under the table fairly trembled with the excitement of resentment.

"And why shan't I—what have you got to do with it? But I understand your game, too, as you call it; you are after the girl yourself; you want her, and that's the reason you interfere!"

"You're quite right, elder; I want her, and that's the reason I interfere," the Danite repeated placidly.

"But do you 'pose I'm going to give her up to you?" Biddeman cried. "Why ain't I got as good a right to her as you, hey?"

"Of course you've got just as good a right, provided she gives it to you."

"I don't understand what you mean?"

"Don't you? Well, I want the girl, if she is willing to come with me of her own free will, not like you who have carried her off by a trick. The girl is in the house now, I suppose; bring her down and let her choose between us. If she takes you, I am content, and will depart in peace."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 400.)

DO NOT FORGET ME!

BY M. L. M.

Do not forget me!
The hours, full-fledged with a joy too deep
For words, have flown too swiftly by. Oh, keep
That joy undimmed.
And though henceforth we two should dwell apart,
Let no memories linger in your heart
Or cloud your brow with care.

Do not forget me!
Think of the happy days when first we met;
Their golden radiance is around us yet—
The glow of love, the glow of youth,
Of that best time, when earth and sea and skies
Revealed new glories to our wondering eyes,
Transfigured by love's power.

Do not forget me!
Go where you will, you are not far from me;
My thoughts will follow you, o'er land and sea,
Unceasingly.
And in the stillness of some lonely hour
Your soul and mine, by strange magnetic power,
Shall hold communion sweet!

Do not forget me!
Think of the love that patient waits for you;
Think of the heart that ever clings to you,
All trustfully.
Content, if sunshine falls around your way,
To brighten every path wherein you stray,
In loneliness to dwell.

Do not forget me!
A kind remembrance is not much to ask!
Surely, it will not be too hard a task
Sometimes to think
Of one for whom the world can yield no bliss
So deep, so true, so exquisite as this—
To love and care for you!

The Scarlet Captain:

OR,
The Prisoner of the Tower.

A STORY OF HEROISM.

BY COL. DELLE SARA,
AUTHOR OF "THE CAPTAIN OF THE LEGION,"
"THE PRIDE OF BAYOU SARA," "SILVER
SAM," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ATTACK ON THE CASTLE.

For some ten minutes the flames from the burning but burnt a hole in the darkness of the night, and then with a crash the roof tumbled in, the walls collapsed, and all was darkness, the heavy smoke rising from the ruins and overhanging them like a funeral pall.

In the meantime Skipton had resumed his former position, and, with a gloomy face, employed himself in removing the blood-stains from the polished blade of his sabre.

"Why did you fire the hut?" Ismail inquired, sternly, the moment Skipton joined the party. The renegade did not like his plans to be tampered with, and he had not intended that the hut should be fired until he had had a chance to gaze upon the features of the man he hated so bitterly rigid in the cold grasp of death.

"Did you not order me to?" Skipton exclaimed, in surprise.

"No; you misunderstood me; but it does not matter, so long as you are sure that your blow was fatal."

"I struck as well as I knew how," the Englishman answered, "and even if some spark of life remained, the man must be more than mortal to resist the effects of the fire. Do you not notice how the flames are flaring now? They have evidently reached the body."

And in truth something that the forked flames delighted to feed up, they were evidently consuming, as Skipton called attention to the devouring blast.

The renegade was satisfied; and when darkness came again and settled upon the scene, with a look of satisfaction upon his stern features he turned away.

At last his vengeance was complete.

"You are three thousand good pieces the richer, Skipton, and in time to come I shall not forget the service."

"I shall trust to your excellency's memory," the Bashi Bazouk replied.

It was but a commonplace remark—a natural one, too, under the circumstances, and yet there was something in it that grated harshly upon the ears of Ismail, but what it was he could not tell. He looked searchingly for a moment into the face of the officer, but Skipton was busy wiping off a spot of blood which had besmeared the handle of his weapon, and which had previously escaped his notice, so he was unaware of the scrutiny to which he was subjected.

Ismail dismissed his suspicion as a whim, unworthy of notice, and summoning his men proceeded straight to the castle.

The inmates, whose attention had been attracted by the flames rising from the burning hut, were on the alert, and at first were disposed to offer resistance to the entrance of the Turks, but a few well-aimed shots speedily put to flight all martial thoughts, and tremblingly the gates were opened.

Once again the dark-browed ruffian held Catherine, of Scutari, a prisoner in his hands. Some fifteen or twenty minutes had been occupied in forcing an entrance, so the countess had ample time to prepare to receive the evil genius who was making himself the bane of her young existence.

In the great hall of the castle, where in the olden time the armed retainers had been used to assemble to receive the commands of their chief, the officer and his followers found the two ladies.

Skipton Pasha had been left in charge of the gate and horses with his four men, but the rest of the force had followed Ismail.

Catherine had vainly attempted to urge the servants to resist the entrance of the Turks; but the men, frightened at the stories they had heard of the bloody vengeance always taken by the Moslems when their demands were resisted, were far too timid to follow the bold counsel of the countess, and while she, in the great hall, was attempting to inspire these chicken-hearted cravens with some of the courage springing within her own dauntless breast, the men below opened the gate and admitted the Turks.

Plainly to the ears of the two ladies came the sound of the tramping feet and the rattle of the weapons, clanking loudly, as the Turkish soldiers rushed up the stairs.

Within the garments of both of the ladies little keen-edged daggers were secreted. They were prepared for the worst; better death by their own hands than to live the helpless victims of barbarous outrages.

The dark eyes of Ismail gleamed as he gazed once again upon the woman whom he had marked out for his prey. Catherine faced him boldly; there was no drop of craven blood within her veins; all the courage of the stout old race from which she sprung was within her woman's breast.

"Fortune favors me, you see!" the renegade exclaimed. "Again we are face to face—again I step forward as the ruler of your fate."

"Will your persecution never cease?" demanded Catherine, undauntedly.

"Never until you are mine!" the Turkish general replied.

"Distant will be that day."

"No; quite near at hand. This night I have widowed you, but to-morrow I will make amends by wedding you myself."

"And has the Scarlet Captain died again?" Catherine asked, scornfully.

"The last time but one when we met in the old tower you swore that he was dead, and yet he was not."

"A mistake then—a false report, but no doubt in regard to the matter this time."

In Catherine's face appeared decided unbelief.

"But come, we are wasting time!" Ismail exclaimed, abruptly. "Are you prepared for a journey?"

"Whither?"

"To some safe retreat within the Turkish lines," he replied. "The heiress of Scutari is far too valuable to be permitted to dwell where she may be assailed at any moment by a roving band of plunderers."

"If there are worse men in the world than you and your followers, Heaven save me from them!" the countess cried, her anger flaming suddenly out when she reflected how utterly helpless she was in the power of this bold, bad man.

"Catherine, why waste time in useless recriminations. You are mine past all redemption. The only man to whom you could look for any hope of rescue has been sent by my will on his dark journey to the other world."

By wedding this adventurer you thought to defeat my plans; for a time you succeeded, but in the end I have triumphed; you have lost the point you attempted to gain and this unknown soldier bartered away his life for the meager and unsubstantial pleasure of hearing the name of husband to you for a few short hours. Come! give up all hope of resistance; I defy either man or devil to tear you from me now!"

Hardly had this boasting speech escaped his lips, and he had advanced to the side of the helpless girl, when there was a sudden commotion in the hallway below; the sounds of a brief struggle was followed by the rush of many feet up the broad stairs.

Alarmed, the Turks gathered together, drew their weapons, and prepared for a conflict.

It did not seem possible, and yet they feared that they were surprised; although how careful, cautious Skipton Pasha, on guard below, could have allowed an enemy to steal upon him unawares was a mystery.

Not long was the suspense; through the open doors came a host of Montenegrin soldiers, led by Lauderdale, the young prince and—the Scarlet Captain!

The Turks could hardly believe their eyes. Here, in full health was the man whom they had fully believed to have perished in the ruins of the old hut.

The presence of Skipton Pasha in front of the Montenegrin host, evidently not a prisoner, for he was fully armed, partially explained the mystery.

The Englishman had been false to the trust reposed in him, and had not only neglected to kill the prisoner, but had connived at his escape.

A scream of joy came from the lips of the countess as she beheld the rescuing host—a scream re-echoed by her foster-sister, Alexina.

For a moment the renegade stared like a man stricken into stone; but when his eyes fell upon Skipton Pasha, his rage knew no bounds.

"Dog of an Englishman, you have betrayed me! In hell seek thy reward!" and with the word leveling his already cocked revolver at Skipton, he essayed to pull the trigger; but the adventurer was prepared for the action; his pistol was in his hand and ready. He fired on the instant before Ismail Bay could discharge his weapon.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CATHERINE'S DECISION.

It was a fatal shot!

Full in the broad chest of the renegade the bullet struck, and straight a passage the leaden missile cut to the bold heart, while Ismail's pistol exploded harmlessly in the air, the ball passing high over the heads of the Montenegrins.

For a moment Ismail stood still as a statue, and as erect, and all believed that he had escaped unhurt; then he pressed his hand convulsively to his breast, staggered and sunk down, all in a heap, dead; the ball had cut the heart in twain and life had ceased almost on the instant, but the great nervous energies of the man had sufficed to keep him upon his feet for a moment, as though by the mere strength of his indomitable will he could defy and set at naught the power of the great peace-maker, grim death.

"It was his life or mine!" Skipton exclaimed, suddenly, as if in excuse for the act, "and life is as sweet to me as to any man!"

"Throw down your arms! You are outnumbered ten to one!" the Scarlet Captain cried.

The Turks, dismayed and cowed by the sudden death of their leader, did not attempt to resist. And while the Montenegrins were busy receiving their arms the two ladies greeted their rescuers.

A little apart from the rest stood Catherine and the Montenegrin leader.

"Again you have saved me!" she murmured, with beaming eyes.

"A lucky chance; Heaven seems to favor me," he replied.

"It is fate," and as the countess spoke there was a look in her dark eyes—a peculiar, joyous light which he had never seen there before.

"And now, lady, that you are again free to go where you list, had you not better seek shelter in some fortified town, where you will be safe from all such attacks as this one to-night? The heiress of Scutari is a tempting prize and there's many an adventurer who might attempt to carry out the plan which cost this renegade his life."

"And where go you?" Catherine asked, with evident timidity.

"Back to our fortified camp near Dulcigno, where Montenegro in the future will keep an army of observation to watch the Turks. We are not yet at the end of this struggle, for, if I read the signs aright, Europe is on the eve of a general war. Turkey cannot yield and in time Russia must advance. War must soon come between the two and probably other powers may be drawn in."

"And can I not go there, too?" the countess asked, appealingly.

"Why not seek the comforts some large city affords?" the soldier asked, in astonishment.

"Is it not a wife's duty to follow her husband?" and as she spoke, in her soft, expressive eyes the Scarlet Captain read a world of meaning.

"True; I am your husband, but you forget the conditions you imposed."

"Yes, I do forget them, and do you forget them, too?" she answered, softly.

"But, you are a rich heiress, the Countess of Scutari, and a humble soldier like myself—"

She interrupted him.

"You told me that you would be loved for yourself alone. Be satisfied then; the once proud countess has changed into the loving wife. I will cast aside my rank if it offends you and be content to be the humble wife of the simple soldier, whose name even I do not know. Can I say more?"

"No, Catherine," and the rich voice of the soldier was full of emotion; "with thankfulness I accept the gift which Heaven has given me. As the unknown soldier I married you and as the unknown soldier I have won your love; my cup of joy is full."

One of the Montenegrins approached the Scarlet Captain and, saluting respectfully, asked:

"What disposition shall be made of the prisoners, your highness?"

Catherine stared, opening wide her large eyes.

"Your highness!" she exclaimed, in wonder.

The Scarlet Captain smiled.

"The lady does not know me. It is the Countess of Scutari; pray introduce me in due form, colonel," he said, gravely.

The officer did not exactly understand it, but perceiving that the speaker was in earnest, proceeded to do as he was bid.

"Countess, allow me to have the pleasure of presenting to you my royal highness, Nicholas, Prince of Montenegro."

The mystery was explained at last: the Scarlet Captain was the young and heroic Montenegrin prince in person!

"Convey the prisoners to our camp. We must make due complaint in regard to the violation of the truce, and show to all the world that we were not the first to break faith."

The officer departed.

"But the young prince of Montenegro?" Catherine asked.

"My brother—a bright lad who willingly consented to aid me to keep up the deception, for, Catherine, I should have always doubted your love if I had won you as the Prince of Montenegro."

The wonderful escape of the prince from his captivity in the old hut, and how he managed to induce Skipton Pasha to prove recreant to his colors, is soon told.

The Englishman guessed at the time of the capture that the unknown Montenegrin was the prince, for the soldier who had been mortally wounded, the prince's orderly, with his dying breath called out:

"Save Prince Nicholas! His horse is down!"

This gave Skipton a clew which he pondered over, but kept the matter to himself.

And then, when the renegade urged him so eagerly to undertake the task of slaying the prisoner, he consented, so that he might aid the prince to escape. To slay the head of the royal house of Montenegro was something too much for the Englishman.

And on entering the old hut he unbanded the captive and told him plumply who he supposed him to be.

The prince did not deny his identity.

"To murder a prince is a cut above me," the blunt Englishman said; "but if I let you escape, why, it will cost me my commission in the Turkish service, and my head, too, if I am not careful to get out of the way."

"Let me go free, and name your price!" the prince had replied.

"No; I won't bargain with a man for his life; but as soon as I can I will get inside the Montenegrin lines, and you can do the best you can for me."

Gladly the captive assented.

Through the open window in the rear the Montenegrin fled. Skipton set the house on fire to cover the escape, and cutting a gash in his leg daubed his saber with the blood, and the groans of pain which had reached the ears of the Turks had come from his own lips. The rest the reader knows.

Lauderdale, bringing up the Montenegrin troops in hot haste, encountered the fleeing prince and had hurried on to the castle, arriving just in the nick of time.

Skipton had posted no guard, expecting to be surprised, and so an easy entrance was obtained.

Five thousand English pounds the late Bashi Bazouk officer received from the grateful prince, and then he hurried home to his native land in hot haste to enjoy his fortune.

Following her friend's example, Alexina soon blessed the American with her hand.

Our story now is ended.

We have related a romantic episode connected with the life of the Prince of Montenegro not generally known to the world, and if any of our readers take an interest in the fortunes of one of the bravest and best princes in Europe, let them scan the war news from the Old World, now daily given in our journals.

In 1877, as in 1876, the period of which we have written, the able Montenegrin leader has beaten the Turks at all points, fighting at tremendous odds, too, 60,000 Moslems against 10,000 Montenegrins.

Since the world began, the pages of history have never chronicled a more daring or more successful fight, and the good wishes of all civilized people must go with the able general whose early exploits we have related and whose fortunes the reader has followed as the Scarlet Captain.

THE END.

Sports and Pastimes.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

FOOTBALL.

WHILE we as Americans have been wise in following the healthy example of our English cousins in fostering out-door sports and recreative exercise, as we have done in the past decade, we have rather overdone the thing in some respects, especially in the case of our adoption of some English field sports in which there is more to be condemned than to be commended. Not to mention the absurd attempt recently made to introduce the favorite field-sport of the wealthy class of England, the English nobility, fox-hunting, in this country, we propose to enter our protest against the substitution of the rough and dangerous English sport of football as a fall and spring field-game for a verian college students, for the American Indian game of La Crosse, which is the superior of football in every respect, as a recreative exercise in the field for October, November and December, and the early spring months, when base-ball and cricket cannot well be played. Where a special sport is needed as an exercise for any class of our American youth, and there is nothing of American origin to take up, it is well enough to adopt a foreign sport; but when we have a game of our own which is in every way preferable to the imported one, it should be encouraged by all means. In this way has base-ball supplanted cricket, though in this instance the English game is well worthy of encouragement; and in the same way should La Crosse be preferred to the English game of football.

The latter game, in all its peculiar features, was fully exhibited in the metropolis during October and November, in the latter month of which first-class contests took place on the football field at Hoboken, between the University fifteen, of Harvard, and the College fifteen, of Columbia and Princeton, and also the fifteen of the Stevens Institute and New York College. Under the revised code of football rules, known as the "Amended Rugby Code," the game has been brought down to a mere series of wrestling-matches for the possession of the ball, technically known as "scrimmages" and "mauling," the latter being a most appropriate term indeed. Briefly, football, as now played, is a fierce, rough struggle between numbers of athletic men in wrestling, throwing each other down, pushing, tripping, grasping, and in any way whatever forcing the ball away from the one man who holds it. The game opens with the ball being placed in the center of the field and then kicked toward the goal of the opposite party to the kicker.

This done, the struggle for the possession of the ball begins. If the party who gets hold of it after the first kick can retain possession of it, he immediately runs toward his opponents' goal-ground with the ball under his arm, and if he is able to get on the ground in question, he touches it with the ball, as near to the goal posts as he can. This entitles his side to the right to kick it over the goal, which counts one goal saved. On his grasping the ball after the first kick his fight with his opponents begins and is kept up continuously until he is forced to yield the ball or touches the ground with it. It is in this continuous fight for the ball that the "scrimmages" take place and the "mauling" is done. Rough is no name for the handling the holder of the ball gets in a scrimmage. Men have been dragged out of these "scrimmages" ruptured, sprained, bruised and injured in a manner which has disabled them for months, and in some cases for life. There is one thing about football, and that is that weight and muscle in the player are the main essentials of success.

Mental ability has no special field of operation in a football contest. The best runner, who is at the same time a man of weight and muscle, and especially a good wrestler, is best man in a football fifteen. There is but little opportunity for strategic play, the nearest approach to it being the act of "passing" the ball. To get a "touch-down," one has to encounter only a number of knock-downs, push-downs, and fall-downs, not to mention trip-downs. In the last match at Princeton between the College team of that place and the Columbia College fifteen, one of the Princeton players was carried from the field badly ruptured, while several of the Columbias, as well as the Princeton, had sprained ankles and knees and wrenched arms. Now all these objectionable characteristics of football are avoided in La Crosse, while a grace of motion is imparted in the latter game, and a field for strategic skill is afforded which football knows nothing of. By all means let La Crosse be substituted for the rough and dangerous sport of football.

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